Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

2174

Ravenloft®

2nd Edition Campaign Setting

Domains of Dread

By William W. Connors & Steve Miller



Dedications

For James and Amy Wyatt.
Sometimes new friends are the best friends.
- William W. Connors

This book is dedicated to my friend Christian Rojas.
Words cannot express my loss.
- Cindi Rice

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Introduction

If you look at the credits, you'll find that Steve and I are listed as the designers of this product. If the truth be known (and it's about to be), the credit for this book is not so easily divided.

Tracy Hickman wrote the original RAVENLOFT in module for the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, and from that source was drawn the idea of a game line that would serve as a cross between gothic horror and medieval fantasy. In 1989, Andria Hayday and Bruce Nesmith were given the task of turning that single, thirty-two page adventure into an entire game world. They created the Mists, the domains, and everything else that is Ravenloft over the course of the next few months.

In the wake of their work, others stepped into the shadows and joined the RAVENLOFT team (known as the Kargat). The most influential of these (at least by word count) would be David Wise, Lisa Smedman, and myself. Each of us has done our best to create works that hopefully live up to the high standard established by the original Realm of Terror boxed set.

Still, the RAVENLOFT campaign setting is a shared world. Over the years countless authors, editors, artists, and directors have contributed to the line. With each new perspective came new ideas and new nightmares. We've come up with new methods, characters, and story lines. Some we've put into print, and some we've put on hold for now. Over the last few years we've added some new faces to the RAVENLOFT team; foremost among them are Cindi Rice and Miranda Horner, the editors of this book, and Steve Miller, my co-author. It is humbling to discover how much better they know the lore of Ravenloft than I do. Without them, this book would be far less than it is.

The publication of this book begins a new era for the Demiplane of Dread. While most game revisions are made to correct flaws, we've always been pleased with the existing rules. Thus, this book focuses on expansions far more than revisions. Domains of Dread is by far the most ambitious product ever attempted by the Kargat. It presents not only the RAVENLOFT campaign setting and the creatures (good and bad) who live there, but also rules for playing characters native to the Land of the Mists.

By some standards, I'm not very good at running the AD&D game. Many players come to the gaming table expecting at least one high-body-count fight per game session. For some reason, though, 1 never seem to get around to them. In the twenty months I've been running my current campaign, there have been a grand total of five notable combats. One reason for this is that combats bore me. I'm much more interested in story-telling, character development, and role-playing. That's why the RAVENLOFT setting appealed so strongly to me, first as a Dungeon Master, and later as an editor and designer for TSR, Inc. The RAVENLOFT setting, if used to its full potential, is all about characters. From the player characters to the darklords, every character in the Demiplane of Dread has a story, and when that story intersects with that of the heroes, tragedy, terror, and high drama invariably follow.

If there was one weakness I saw in the RAVENLOFT setting as presented in its first four years of existence, it was that the official setting smacked entirely too much of The Village from the television series The Prisoner. More often than not, unless the Dungeon Master made certain elaborations the setting wasn't really designed to support, campaigns would invariably revolve around escaping the Demiplane of Dread and returning home. That is why the addition of native player characters was so important. When I came to work for TSR in 1994, I started agitating to make RAVENLOFT more of a "home base". The heavy- hitters involved with the line agreed with me, and you're holding the result.

Thanks go to Bill Connors and Harold Johnson, who were the Kargat control agents when I started writing blunt memos about what 1 felt was "wrong" about TSR's approach to the RAVENLOFT setting. They could have slapped me down, but they chose not to. In fact, Bill became the primary force behind what we hope will open new horizons for RAVENLOFT players everywhere.

Thanks also go to Andria Hayday, Bruce Nesmith, and Tracy Hickman for laying down the tracks for me to follow. I can truly say that without their efforts, I wouldn't be typing these words - or any others for TSR, Inc.

I also need to mention my fellow garners on the Internet RAVENLOFT mailing list. Their comments and feedback were invaluable while working on this book.

We have some exciting plans for the Demiplane of Dread. Let's just say that there are dark times ahead in Ravenloft - times that will cause folk, even the Vistani, to look back on the Grim Harvest and Grand Conjunction as the good old days.

Enjoy,
William W. Connors

Finally, I want to thank Cindi Rice for her attention to detail and her insistence on keeping us to the highest standards of quality. Bill and I may be getting the top billing, but without her, this book wouldn't be what it is.

Steve Miller



Chapter One

The Demiplane of Dread

Yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe.
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all.


– John Milton
Paradise Lost

Ravenloft is not a world in the traditional sense. In actuality, it is a demiplane - a pocket universe suspended amid the vapors of the Ethereal Plane. This section begins with a study of the structure of the Demiplane of Dread.

The Nature of the Demiplane

Exactly what a demiplane is or how it comes into being is a matter of debate and controversy, even among those who travel the planes of existence routinely. In the most basic of terms, however, it is a self-contained pocket dimension that hangs suspended in the Ethereal Plane. Also, the Demiplane is divided into independent domains, which are each ruled by a domain lord.

Like all demiplanes, Ravenloft has its own natural laws and physics. Of course, these are subject to change at the whim of the dark powers that seem to control the Demiplane. For the most part, however, these laws are consistent and reliable.

Entrances...

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Demiplane of Dread is that it is something of a closed universe. Much like a Venus's-flytrap or the deadly pitcher plant, it allows the unwitting to enter while making escape almost impossible.

Spells

The ways into the Land of the Mists are many and varied. Relatively common magical spells and items, like the priest's *plane shift* or an *amulet of the planes*, can allow someone to make his way into the Demiplane of Dread. Of course, exactly why someone would purposefully travel to this forlorn place is beyond comprehension.

Portals

It is also said that a few portals, both temporary and permanent, lead into the Land of the Mists. Sometimes, when the stars align or a certain series of events occur, temporary gates open into the Realms of Terror. Other places - ancient shrines to forgotten gods of evil and the like - are said to hold hidden portals that can instantly transport the unwary into Ravenloft. Whether true or not, both of these speculations seem plausible and merit caution on the part of adventurers.

The Mists

Most travelers who end up in Ravenloft do not seek the Demiplane. They are drawn in by the clutching tendrils of the Mists. Exactly what the Mists are or how they function is unknown. It is for this reason that the folk of Ravenloft refer to the Mists in much the same way that children might speak of a bogeyman. In Ravenloft, anything unknown and threatening is generally ascribed to the Mists, whether any connection actually exists or not.

When most people think of the Mists, they envision swirling clouds of white vapor that roll out of the ground to consume evildoers. This belief certainly has a great deal of merit, for the Mists of Ravenloft do appear to be the agents of the dark powers.

On the other hand, the Mists often travel to various places without any apparent cause, and even randomly abduct individuals for no obvious reason. When they do this, the Mists are as likely to affect those who are good or neutral as those

who are evil. Some feel that these are merely random events - unpredictable and unstoppable. Others say that a grim purpose lurks behind these apparently chaotic abductions. The truth will almost certainly remain unknown until such time as the true nature of the dark powers is revealed.

For some reason, the Mists never travel to the Inner or Outer Planes. Exactly why this is, none can say. While some insist that the powers of those planes are so awesome that they are able to hold the Mists back, this seems unlikely. If a gate spell can pierce the borders of these otherworldly realms, it seems impossible to accept that the Mists could not do so if they wished.

...and Exits

While there are many ways to reach the Demiplane of Dread, routes out of that mire of evil are far fewer. Indeed, many think true escape from Ravenloft is impossible. They say that those who manage to leave the Demiplane will be drawn back one day, since the Mists never forget anyone they have chosen to embrace. However, whether escape from Ravenloft is permanent or temporary matters little for the purposes of this discussion.

Spells

It is virtually impossible to escape the Realms of Terror by means of magical spells or items. The priest's *plane shift* spell, for example, is unable to pierce the borders of the Demiplane. Even spells as powerful as *wish* are wasted if used in an attempt to escape from Ravenloft. Magical items, like an *amulet of the planes*, are similarly overwhelmed by the fabric of the land. It is rumored that a mystical device known as the *Rift Spanner* can pierce the veil of the Mists, but both the existence of this object and the extent of its abilities remain unproven.

Complete details on the use of spells in the Demiplane of Dread can be found in Chapters Eight and Nine.

Portals

While there are no permanent portals out of Ravenloft, temporary gates to the Prime Material Plane do exist. As a rule, however, these gates must be triggered by some natural or supernatural act. Examples of such triggers include astronomical phenomena (like eclipses and conjunctions), the completion of certain arcane rituals, and the fulfillment of macabre prophecies.

When and if a portal to the Prime Material Plane can be found, it can seldom be directed or controlled. Indeed, these fleeting gateways are often as hazardous to use as they are to ignore. When stepping into such a portal, the user usually has no idea where he will emerge. Of course, more than one adventurer has noted that almost any place is better than the Demiplane of Dread

The Mists

Just as they can draw people into Ravenloft, so can the Mists transport them out. While this is not a common occurrence, it has been known to happen from time to time. This is by far the least common and least reliable means of escaping from the Demiplane of Dread. A hero who decides to simply sit back and wait for the Mists to return for him is likely to grow old and gray before he actually gets home, if he ever does!

The Lords

It is not uncommon for one of the diabolical lords of the Demiplane to promise outsiders that he will transport them to their

homeland in exchange for some service. In truth, this action is beyond the power of even the greatest of Ravenloft's domain lords.

The Border Ethereal

Only one alternate dimension can be reached with any degree of certainty or frequency by the inhabitants of Ravenloft. Known as the Border Ethereal, this misty region is a sort of dimensional membrane that insulates the Ethereal Plane from the rest of the multiverse. Most ghosts and other incorporeal creatures exist at least partially within the Border Ethereal.

In other places, those who enter the Border Ethereal can then move on to either the Ethereal Plane itself or into other planes of existence. Those who begin their journey in Ravenloft, however, are not able to slip the bonds of the Mists so easily. When they opt to leave behind the Border Ethereal, such travelers will always find themselves returned to the Demiplane of Dread.

Doctrine of Darkness

For the common man, life in Ravenloft is no different from that on Oerth, Toril, or the sunburnt deserts of Athas. People are born, they grow old, and they die. They learn a trade, master it, and use it to earn a living. Dawn comes, as does dusk and the lingering night. Stories about evil things and dark creatures abound, but these are generally nothing more than faerie tales and superstitions. Only rarely is the common man made aware of the terrors that surround him on the Demiplane of Dread.

Adventurers, however, have a somewhat more sophisticated view of the world. Like most scholars and sages, they are familiar with the ways of magic and nature, especially those who traveled to the Demiplane from other worlds, and know that all is not as it should be within the coils of the Mists.

The following points are absolute rules that any Dungeon Master can use when creating a Ravenloft adventure or running a campaign. If an adventure conforms to these doctrines, it is well on its way to fitting the gothic flavor of the Demiplane of Dread.

Divitation

Magical and psionic divination is unreliable in Ravenloft. The distorting influences of the land make it difficult to discern things that magicians in other lands find all but obvious.

Good and Evil: The most frequently encountered example of this change involves the sensing of alignments. Ordinarily, spells like detect euil and know alignment can ferret out the pure of heart from those who follow the path of darkness. For psionicists, the same is true of the aura reading ability.

In Ravenloft, however, such things are not so apparent. The use of any such spell can reveal only whether a creature is lawful or chaotic, not whether it is good or evil.

Dungeon Masters should be aware that players have a tendency to see that which is chaotic as evil and to judge those who are lawful as good. This is, of course, not the case. Some of Ravenloft's most fiendish creatures are of lawful evil alignment.

Undead: On most worlds, the foul and corrupting presence of the undead is easy to detect. In addition to spells like detect undead, any magical or psionic power that allows one even a brief glimpse into the thoughts of these creatures usually reveals that all is not as it should be. In Ravenloft, however, this issue is not so easily resolved.

Attempts to detect undead do not always succeed; if the creature makes a successful saving throw vs. spell, the spell fails to detect anything unusual. In addition, those spells are frequently blocked by physical obstructions that would not impede their functions on other worlds.

Spells designed to tap into the thoughts of self-willed undead reveal whatever the creature wishes the caster to know. Thus, a vampire who has been stalking the party might allow them to believe that he is actually intent on helping them, not planning to feast upon their blood.

Prophecy and Prognostication: Spells designed to predict the future or reveal the outcome of present actions are very untrustworthy in Ravenloft. Any such spell indicates only the probable course of events and, in many cases, might be controlled or affected by the whims of the local domain lord.

This restriction does not apply to the auguries of the Vistani. These gypsies of the Mists have far more reliable magic at their disposal than the heroes. Of course, this assumes that the gypsies are being honest with the adventurers. On more than one occasion, an offended Vistani has offered up false or misleading information that led down a trail of suffering from which there was no return.

Necromancy

Just as divination is altered by the Land of the Mists, so too is the dark power of necromancy corrupted. Where the former is reduced in effectiveness, however, the latter becomes more powerful. As a casual look at the modified spell descriptions in Chapters Eight and Nine will indicate, the power of the dead and undead in Ravenloft is great.

Such power has a price, however. The use of necromancy is very dangerous in the Demiplane of Dread. Not only does the casting of each and every one of these spells require a powers check, but the chance of failing such checks is greater than for other spells (as described in Chapter Seven).

Magical Transportation

Spells that allow people to travel through space or across dimensions are reduced in effectiveness in Ravenloft. No spell, not even wish, can transport someone across a closed domain border or out of the Demiplane. The only known exception to this guideline is the awesome Rift Spanner, a magical artifact of terrible evil constructed by the night hag Styrix.

The Power of Domain Lords

Put simply, the lord of any domain is so powerful that a direct confrontation will almost certainly result in death... or worse. Whenever a character attempts to use a spell, psionic power, or similar ability to counter one of the domain lord's special abilities, the domain lord will emerge triumphant. For example, if the lord of the domain calls into being a great storm, no power of the characters, no matter how strong, will drive the gale off or lessen its severity in any way.

The only way to defeat a domain lord, even a minor one, is to discover his weaknesses and use them against him. These creatures are very nearly omnipotent, but they are never omniscient.

Power Checks and Corruption

From time to time, a once valiant hero can be led astray and consumed by the darkness that is Ravenloft. This is reflected through powers checks (as detailed in Chapter Seven).

It is important to note, however, that the dark powers never attempt to lead people down the path of evil. Only those who willingly pursue that dark way are recognized by the land. Those who do what is right and noble need never fear the embrace of the dark powers. Of course, such an assurance does not apply to corruption by other creatures. Even the most pious monk can fall prey to the wiles of a vampire and become a creature of the night.


Lamordia
The Slain City
Necropolis
Sea of Sorrows
Keening
Tepest
Vemenfleu
Falkovnia
Shadow Rift
Mordent
Richemulot
Borca
The Fiend Strahd
Nova Vaasa
Nocturnal Sea
Verbrek
Valachan
Barovia
Invidia
Forlorn
The Tower of Black Roses
Karfahas
Hazlan
Sithicus



The Dark Powers

One must never forget that Ravenloft is not a natural realm; it is a construct. Just as a flesh golem is but a mockery of the man from which it is assembled, Ravenloft is an imperfect copy of the worlds that dot the Prime Material Plane.

In the case of the golem, the twisted mind of its creator defines this imperfect reflection. Only his grim determination and maniacal devotion give shape and life to the creature. The same is true, after a fashion, of the Demiplane of Dread. All of Ravenloft is a shadowy reflection of the mysterious dark powers who maintain these Realms of Terror.

Common Understanding

The average citizens of Ravenloft are not truly interested in the existence of the dark powers. To such folk, the dark powers are synonymous with the universal bogeyman they call "the Mists".

All matters of misfortune or evil are attributed to the influences of the Mists. If someone dies a mysterious death, it is the influence of the Mists. If a craftsman accidentally cuts off his finger, he has run afoul of the Mists. All things dark and sinister are but a manifestation of these nefarious vapors.

Because of this belief, it can be difficult for a group of adventurers to get any useful information about the nature of the Demiplane from the average citizen. In addition to being a remarkably xenophobic lot, the natives of Ravenloft generally have little curiosity about (or knowledge of) the true nature of their world.

Scholars and Sages

Those who have studied the dark powers and their doings have come to a few definite conclusions about them. While these conclusions have not been proven factual, they are the accepted dogma for discussions and debates about the masters of the Demiplane.

Enticements: The dark powers do not lead people astray. While many stories tell of the Mists or dark powers offering innocent people great rewards in exchange for evil services, these appear to be uniformly fictitious.

In order for a person to come to the attention of the dark powers, he must first do something evil. In game terms, this is reflected through the making of powers checks as described in Chapter Seven.

Pacts: Just as there are many accounts of people being led astray by the dark powers, so too are there stories about those who have struck deals with these mysterious creatures. Most of these stories involve a hero (or villain) giving up his purity in exchange for some terrible power or wish.

Intriguing as these stories may be, they are just that - stories. No evidence supports these claims, leading all those who are knowledgeable about the fabric of the Demiplane to conclude that the dark powers never strike pacts with mortals.

There are those who point out that the coming of Strahd von Zarovich into Ravenloft would appear to violate this tenet. However, by his own admission, the Great Vampire struck a deal with some tremendously evil entity that he refers to only as "Death". This creature is not necessarily associated with the dark powers.

Communing: Despite countless claims to the contrary, it appears that it is impossible for anyone to directly converse with the dark powers. Whether this is a physical reality, perhaps brought on by the fact that the human mind could not comprehend these strange beings, or simply a result of their unwillingness to carry on a dialogue with mortal creatures is unknown.

Again, the case of Strahd von Zarovich seems to contradict this doctrine. After all, if the Lord of Barovia did indeed strike a bargain with the dark powers, he must certainly have spoken with them. This would seem to support the belief that the vampire's account of his transformation is not entirely factual. Of course, the possibility that Strahd is accurately relating his experiences remains a distinctly disturbing possibility.

Defining the Dark Powers

Is it possible, therefore, to learn the secrets of the dark powers through a careful study of the macabre place they have created? One would think so, but proving the validity of the conclusions produced by such a study would be difficult or even impossible.

The precise nature of the dark powers is debated by sages and scholars throughout the land. Sages have argued about it since the earliest days of Ravenloft's existence. Quite simply, no one seems to know the answer to this question. More importantly, it is impossible to say whether any given answer is right or wrong. The Demiplane's most educated residents have uncovered conflicting evidence, supporting any number of possible answers. Consider the following arguments:

The Dark Powers are Evil: Certainly, evidence exists to support this belief. After all, the dark powers have gone to a great deal of trouble to create a vast region in which to concentrate the evil of the multiverse. Could this be something of a recruiting center from which an incredible army of malevolence will one day be released? That possibility could be the most frightening conclusion one can reach.

The Dark Powers are Good: An equal number of scholars put forth the assumption that the dark powers are actually creatures of good, not evil. After all, they have imprisoned some of the most terrible beings in the multiverse. In fact, not only are these creatures imprisoned, they are endlessly tormented. Can any force that so punishes evildoers be considered anything but good?

The Dark Powers are Few: Some scholars believe it is incorrect to use the plural when referring to the masters of Ravenloft. It is their assertion that a single entity, whether good or evil, rules the entire Demiplane.

This theory is especially popular among those who believe that Ravenloft was created for some special purpose. If this is the case, it is easier for them to believe that a single entity is working behind the scenes to coordinate these events.

The Dark Powers are Many: Equally or even more popular, however, is the belief that the dark powers are numerous. According to this theory, no single being could accomplish all that the dark powers have.

Of course, exactly how numerous the dark powers are remains a subject of much debate. Some say that there are three, the number in a coven of hags, while others insist they are a legion. To date, however, no one has provided any evidence to support these claims.

The Dark Powers are Imaginary: At the root of all debates about the dark powers, of course, is the question of whether or not they even exist. Many say that they are nothing more than a manifestation of the darkest side of the imagination.

To be sure, no physical proof of their existence has surfaced. While many people claim to have seen the dark powers, none of these reports are verifiable or even especially reliable.

The Dark Powers are Real: Of course, if the dark powers do not exist, it is difficult to explain the creation of the Demiplane of Dread. Most Ravenloft scholars agree that the dark powers, whoever or whatever they are, do exist.

The Domain Lords

Some people confuse the dark powers with the oftcalled darklords. In terms of semantics, this is understandable enough. Those who have even the most basic understanding of the true nature of Ravenloft, however, would never make such a mistake. The lords of Ravenloft's scattered realms are more properly called "domain lords", although the term "darklord" is commonly accepted. Descriptions of individual domain lords appear with their respective domains in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.

Domain lords are extremely powerful beings, and they should not be encountered often. The domain lords should be the subject of stories and rumors, not the targets of monster hunts. While it is unknown as to whether domain lords are actually immortal, they have proven to be extremely long-lived. Many do not even seem to have aged since their arrival on the Demiplane.

Magnitudes of Evil

Just as even the most similar of twins are not perfectly identical, so too are the lords of Ravenloft unique. Because of the variations inherent in these creatures, several categories have been established to define them. In reviewing this information, the reader must keep in mind the fact that no chain of command links these nefarious beings. This is due not only to the fact that no lord can leave his domain, but also because none of these creatures would ever accept a subservient role.

Demilords

Demilords are the rulers of Ravenloft's Pocket domains (as described in the "Geography" section of this chapter). While these are the least significant of Ravenloft's domain rulers, they are by no means less evil than their more powerful counterparts.

In addition to having the smallest domains, demilords usually possess the fewest powers. Examples of demilords include the Phantom Lover, Davion the Mad, and Lemot Sediam Juste.

Lords

Although the term "lord" is often used to describe any of Ravenloft's domain rulers, it is only correctly applied to the rulers of the various Islands of Terror. These vile creatures are more powerful than demilords but less powerful than the overlords who rule the domains of Ravenloft's scattered Clusters.

Examples of Island lords include the Illithid God-brain of Bluetspur and Yagno Petrovna of G'Henna.

Overlords

From time to time, a group of Islands will drift together to form a Cluster. A more complete discussion of this topic can be found in the "Geography" section of this chapter. The lords of these domains, who are properly called overlords, are among the most powerful beings one is likely to encounter in the Demiplane of Dread.

Examples of overlords include the dreadful Anhktepot, master of Har'Akir, and Kas the Destroyer, ruler of Tovag.

Adventures featuring overlords should prove challenging for high-level adventurers and deadly to lesser heroes.

Darklords

The most powerful of Ravenloft's lords are those who rule the domains of the Core, the largest group of domains in the Demiplane of Dread. Known as darklords, these powerful beings can crush even high-level adventurers with little effort.

An adventure that features a darklord should prove fatal to any group of adventurers - even very powerful ones - who do not use their brains as well as their brawn. Examples of darklords include Strahd von Zarovich, Harkon Lukas, and Lord Soth.

Beyond Redemption

Dungeon Masters and players should always remember that the lords of Ravenloft's many domains are utterly evil. This is not to say that they may not be tragic figures, only that the time when they might have been saved from their dark fates has long since passed. The Demiplane of Dread embraces no creature that has any hope of redemption. If even the faintest spark of truth or goodness smolders within a person, he will not be granted his own domain.

Player Character Lords

Keeping in mind the above information, it should be obvious that no player character can ever become a domain lord. Long before an adventurer descends to the depths of malevolence from which domain lords are born, he will have lost control of his character and seen it transformed into a nonplayer character.

Remember, the RAVENLOFT game is about heroes confronting dark forces. Those who submit to, side with, or willingly embrace evil are not heroes.

Prisoners of the Mists

It must never be forgotten that the lords of Ravenloft's many domains are not there of their own free will. Certainly, they chose to perform the evil acts that brought them to their current states, but they never bargained on the attentions of the dark powers. The domain lords are as much prisoners of the Demiplane as any adventurer.

While some have come to terms with this fate, others would do anything to escape the shackles of mist that hold them fast to the Demiplane of Dread.

Mirror Images

The domain lords are intimately tied to the fabric of Ravenloft. The lord of each land is the very heart of the province. The terrain, the natives, the monsters, the effects of magic, and even the enemies there are all reflections of the being who presides over it all.

When a new lord comes into possession of a domain, it will usually seem familiar to him. That is, it will be a mirror of the region he calls home. To be sure, the newly created domain is sometimes a mockery of his former dwelling, but it will always resemble it.

In addition to its natural characteristics, the newly created domain will be shaped by the spirit of its lord and the nature of his evil deeds. Buildings may be bent or twisted, reminding one of their hunchbacked lord, or the rivers might be stained red by clay deposits, making them look like the blood upon which their vampiric lord feasts.

Poetic Justice

While the domain lords do indeed have great power, each also labors under the burden of a terrible curse. They may have been "rewarded" for their evil acts - which range from murdering their own families to destroying entire nations - with their own realms, but this is little consolation. The fate of a domain lord is actually far worse than that of his subjects or the adventurers who explore his domain. Not only are the domain lords prisoners in their lands, but they are denied that which they most desire. The exact nature of this curse varies, but it will always be such that the domain lord would willingly give up everything to rid himself of it.

Strahd von Zarovich, for example, longs to possess Tatyana, the woman who threw herself from his castle parapets so many centuries ago. He can never have her, but he is constantly tormented by her image - or by women who look just like her. Strahd's greatest desire will never be fulfilled, and this desire is his greatest weakness. The mere sight of a woman who resembles his beloved Tatyana is so upsetting to him that it will often distract him from far more important matters.

The key to understanding the curses under which domain lords labor can be found in their histories. Each and every curse is drawn from the dark past of the domain lord. Not only does it reflect the deeds that have brought the lords to their prisons, it tortures them in a way that no other punishment could. The domain lords designed their own curses long before the dark powers ever took notice of them.

Examples of similar curses can be found throughout literature. Those who wish to design their own domains and, thus, create their own cursed lords, are advised to read such works as *A Christmas Carol* (remember the chains and cashboxes that Marley wore?) and Dante's *Divine Comedy* (particularly *Inferno*).

Cruelty and Manipulation

Domain lords are self-absorbed creatures interested only in satisfying their own debauched hungers. To be sure, an individual lord might have a trusted seneschal or even a beloved bride, but these would be cast aside in a moment if the rewards were sufficient.

Adventurers should remember this fact when dealing with these creatures. If a domain lord seeks to strike a bargain with the heroes, he does so only because he sees some measure of personal gain in the deal. Any gift bestowed by these fiends is a double-edged sword that will be, in the end, far more of a curse than a blessing. No good can ever come of dealing with these twisted creatures.

The History of Ravenloft

I am the Ancient, I am the Land. My beginnings are lost in the darkness of the past. I was the warrior, I was good and just. I thundered across the landfill the wrath, of a just god, but the war yews and the killing years wore down my soul as the wind. wears stone into sand. All goodness slipped from my life; I found my youth and strength gone and all had left was death.

My army settled in the valley of Barovia and took power over the people in the name of a just god, but with none of a god's grace or justice. I called for my family, long unseated from their ancient thrones, and brought them here to settle in Castle Ravenloft. They came with a younger brother of mine, Sergei. He was handsome and youthful. I hated him for both.

Sergei had plucked from the familles of the valley one whose spirit shone above ad others: a rare beauty, who was called "perfection", "joy", and "treasure". Her name was Tatyana, and I longed for her to be mine. I lovedher with all my heart. I loved her for her youth. I loved her for her joy.

But she spumed me! "Old One" was my name to her - "elder" and "brother" also. Her heart went to Sergei. They were betrothed. The date was set.

With words, she called me "brother", but when I loohed into her eyes, they reflected another name: "death". It was the death of the aged that she saw in me. She loved her youth and enjoyed it, but I had squandered mine. The death she saw in me turned her from me, and so I came to hate death, my death. My hate is very strong; I would not be called "death". so soon.

And so I made a pact with Death itseif, a pact of blood. On the day of the wedding, I killed Sergei, my brother. My pact was sealed with his blood.

I found Tatyana weeping in the garden east of the Chapel. She fled from me. She would not let me explain, and a great anger swelled within me. She had to understand the pact I made for her. I pursued her. Finally, in despair, she flung herself from the walls of Ravenloft, and I watched everything I ever wanted fall from my grasp forever.

It was a thousand feet through the mists. No trace of her was ever found. Not even I know her final fate.

Arrows from the castle guards pierced me to my soul, but I did not die. Nor did I live. I became, undead, forever.

I have studied much since then. "Vampyr" is my new name. I still lust for life and youth, and I curse the living that took thier from me. Even the sun is against me. It is the sun and light I fear the most. But little else can harm me now. Even a stake through my heart does not kid me, though it holds me from movement.

I have often hunted for Tatyana. I have even felt her within my grasp, yet she escapes. She taunts me! She taunts me! What will it take to bend her love to me?

- Count Strahd von Zarovich, Master of Barovia
The Tome of Strahd

The true history of Ravenloft begins on a distant world whose name is unspoken even by the bravest of men. Some say that its origins have been forgotten by all but one. That may be true. That shadowy world had kingdoms not unlike those found on Oerth, Faerun, Krynn, or any of the other spheres that circle the fiercely burning stars of the Prime Material Plane. Our journey into the past begins at the heart of one such place. It was called Barovia, and it was the quarry in which the keystone of Ravenloft was cut.

Before we begin our voyage, we must establish certain criteria by which it can be measured. After all, a journey is not judged by its beginning or its end, but by its middle. How we define this transitional period is important.

It has long been the tradition of scholars in Ravenloft to use the Barovian calendar when keeping track of events in the Demiplane of Dread. This is done for many reasons, custom and practicality among them. The fact that it is the accepted standard in Barovia, Necropolis, and among the wandering Vistani makes it as good a yardstick as any. This being the case, we shall adopt the same practice here.

The Time Before

Few, if any, records detail the events surrounding the life of the warrior-prince Strahd von Zarovich. It is known (for he freely admits it) that he and his family had been driven out of their ancestral homes by an enemy he calls the Tergs. Exactly who these people were or what their motivations might have been we have no way of knowing. It is enough to say that they are painted as ransacking barbarians by Strahd, and there seems to be no reason to discount his assertions.

After decades of warfare, Strahd and his legions drove the Tergs back through the mountain passes from which they had come. At long last, the enemy was defeated and the ancestral lands of the Von Zarovich family reclaimed. Entering the valley of Barovia at the head of a weary and battered army, the great prince claimed the right to rule over all the lands that had been reclaimed from the Tergs. Some scholars point to this as being nothing more than the trading of one tyrant for another. Others, however, see Strahd as a liberating hero who claimed no more than was his just reward for years of effort.

As his subjects repaired Castle Ravenloft, Strahd sent word to the scattered survivors of his clan. He called for them to join him and to establish a lineage that would rule over Barovia for centuries to come. By his order, a coronet of the purest silver was created to mark the occasion and become the symbol of power in that green land. Little did Strahd realize that three-quarters of a millennium later, he would still wear that same tarnished crown.

For all his outward enthusiasm and vitality, the lord of Barovia was but a shell of the man he had once been. Years of campaigning had left him mentally, emotionally, and physically drained. While his health was sound enough, his spirit had passed into a gray, wasting period that could only end in a lingering demise of the soul and then the flesh. Strahd had accepted his fate. With the Tergs defeated and the ancestral lands reclaimed, his task was done. Death would come for the aging warrior. He neither feared it nor sought to escape its embrace.

With the coming of his brother Sergei, however, Strahd's life suddenly changed. Sergei was nearly two decades younger than Strahd and among the most handsome men in Barovia. In many ways, he reminded the warrior-prince of himself in the years before he had taken up the sword and shield. He had but to look upon Sergei to see all the vibrance of a life he himself might have known. Strahd, of course, despised him for this.

In coming to the valley, Sergei had met a young woman named Tatyana. She was every bit as beautiful and vital as Sergei, so it came as no surprise to anyone when they announced their plans to marry. Strahd, however, took this news as a defeat greater than any he had ever experienced in war. The lord of Barovia was deeply and passionately in love with this simple village girl. He saw in her a chance to recapture all the things that he thought lost to him. Surely, she was betrothed to the wrong man.

The tragic events that followed are best recorded by the pen of one who was there. See The Tome of Strahd on the following page.

According to the Barovian calendar, it was the year 351 when the Mists descended to claim Strahd, Castle Ravenloft, and the lands of Barovia. No one knows how it is that the Demiplane was formed, although many theories have been put forward.

Perhaps we would be best advised not to look too long into this mystery.

Turning Points

Throughout the grim history of Ravenloft, there have been several points where major changes have occurred that altered the structure of the Demiplane itself. The following are the most important of these.

Formation: 350 to 449

The first hundred years of Ravenloft's existence are dated by most scholars from the year 350, although the actual formation of the Demiplane of Dread did not occur until 351. This is both a matter of convenience and a recognition of the fact that the events which drew the Mists to Barovia predated the actual formation of the land.

The First Century, as it is often called, was a time of microcosm. The only domain held by the Mists was that of Barovia, and the only lord was Strahd von Zarovich. This period is detailed in the novel I, Strahd.

No evidence exists of a true Vistani presence in Barovia at this time, although gypsies are certainly apparent. This is an important note to make, for many scholars have mistakenly referred to the gypsies living in Barovia at this time as Vistani.

Arrivals: 450 to 549

During this period, the domain of Barovia became home to a new race of people, the mysterious Vistani. Their leader, Madame Eva, was quick to see the power of the vampire Strahd and forged an uneasy alliance with him. Exactly where these people came from is unknown, but they clearly had powers no other creature in Ravenloft could fathom. In addition to the Vistani, other notable creatures came into Ravenloft during this period. Most important among them are Jander Sunstar and the lich Azalin.

It is during this time that Strahd faces his first great challenge in Ravenloft. A group of adventurers who found their way into the Mists from some distant land entered Castle Ravenloft intent on the destruction of the vampire within. No record remains of exactly how these foolish heroes died.

Expansion: 550 to 649

Although the second domain of Ravenloft is formed in 547 (Forlorn), it is not until the Third Century that the Demiplane of Dread truly began to grow. Over the course of these ten decades, over a dozen new domains appeared. Exactly what caused this expansion to begin is unknown.

Centuries of isolation left the citizens of Barovia highly xenophobic. The residents of the newly arriving domains had different languages, traditions, and beliefs. Like the Barovians, they too were reluctant to trust their new neighbors. The traditions of isolationism and distrust established during this century have not lessened in the years, decades, or centuries since.

Dead Man's Campaign: 650 to 734

This period of time is best remembered for the wars fought between Falkovnia and the neighboring domain of Darken. Unaware that the lord of Darken had great power over the dead (and undead), Vlad Drakov sent untold armies to their deaths in an effort to increase the size of his holdings. It seems certain that Drakov did not fully understand the nature of his captivity at that time. The Mists recognize only their own borders, not those of men and armies.

The Grand Conjunction: 735 to 740

In 735, the Vistani seer Hyskosa prophesied the destruction of the Demiplane of Dread. In a grim and terrible vision, he foresaw a series of six signs that would come to pass and shatter the Land of the Mists.

Recognizing this chance to escape from his long imprisonment by the Mists, the lich lord Azalin was greatly fascinated by

Hyskosa's words. Due to his interference, however, the fifth and sixth signs of the Conjunction occurred out of order. In the wake of this mishap, chaos swept through the Demiplane. When the Mists cleared and the land was restored, the geography of the Demiplane was greatly changed. Many of the domain lords are still discovering new powers and abilities bequeathed to them during this upheaval.

The most fascinating feature of the "new" Ravenloft was the Shadow Rift. Looking much like a great chasm torn in the heart of the Core, the Rift is an area of swirling mists and darkness. Exactly what it is and what horrors it might hold remain unknown. It is interesting to note that the Vistani will not speak of the place and always make a sign of protection if it is mentioned in their presence.

The Grim Harvest: 740 to 750

Undaunted by his failed attempt to escape the Demiplane of Dread, Azalin undertook a new plan. Using a macabre device, the lich lord planned to transform himself into a demilich. So powerful a creature, he was sure, would be able to easily slip free of the Mists. For nearly a decade, Azalin's plan unfurled. The Infernal Machine he would use to ascend to demilich status was built, and the souls that would power it were harvested.

In the end, however, Azalin's plan appears to have failed. At the critical moment of ascension, a powerful group of adventurers destroyed the machine and, it appears, the lich lord himself.

The destruction of the Infernal Machine had repercussions felt across Darken. Thousands of people were instantly killed. The city of II Aluk became a ruined city of the dead, from which the domain drew its new name: Necropolis.

In the wake of this disaster, a terrible creature rose to power in the domain of Necropolis. Calling himself Death, he appears to embody exactly that. Although it is certain that Death's power is great, it seems clear that he is not the actual lord of the domain. Indeed, as of this writing, no darklord appears to be ruling Necropolis.

While all of this was going on in Il Aluk, another tragedy befell the Domains of Dread. After decades of battling evil, the esteemed Dr. Rudolph van Richten died at the hands of the evil Madame Radanavich. The fact that the great vampire hunter dragged Radanavich into the grave with him is scant consolation for the demise of this great hero.

Most recently, the Burning Peaks Cluster has formed in the Mists, bringing with it perhaps the most powerful domain lord to date: Vecna. Simultaneously, a new sea appeared on the eastern side of the Core. The Nocturnal Sea brought with it new islands to explore (though some are actually former Islands of Terror) and new horrors to behold.

The Present: 751

Ravenloft campaigns created using this book are assumed to begin in the year 751.

This is a time of confusion and mystery in the Demiplane of Dread. Scholars wonder about the ascension of Death in the land of Necropolis. Many wonder if the lich lord Azalin actually perished in the destruction of II Aluk, fearing that he may return to torment the citizens of Necropolis as he did those of Darkon.

Van Richten's death is another topic of concern. Some believe that his death marks the beginning of a truly vile age for the Land of Mists. Without this great champion to inspire others, will new heroes arise to face the evils that stalk the night?

Another source of great confusion and dread is the mysterious Shadow Rift. Enigmatic and malevolent, this churning pit of darkness bodes nothing but evil. No one knows what horrors dwell within its dark folds and how long the sheer walls of the Rift will contain them. The fact that it so terrifies the Vistani only compounds everyone else's fears.

There are many who have said that the gypsies of the Mists have some macabre purpose to all they do. Whether this is true or not remains to be seen. However, for good or evil, the Vistani are tied to the land like no other race.



Ravenloft Timeline

The timeline briefly outlines the history of the Demiplane of Dread. More details on the domains and charactes mentioned here are given in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.



1	The Nation of Barovia is founded on an unknown world by the ancestors of Strahd von Zarovich. Virtually nothing else is known about this place or time.
299	Strahd von Zarovich is born in Barovia.
320	The Tergs invade Barovia, conquering the ancestral lands of the von Zarovich family.
321	Strahd von Zarovich leads the armies of Barovia in battle againist the Tergs in an attempt to reclaim his ancestral lands.
321	Strahd von Zarovich leads the armies of Barovia in battle againist the Tergs in an attempt to reclaim his ancestral lands.
347	The defeated Tergs are driven from Barovia. Strahd claims the throne as his reward.
349	Sergei von Zarovich comes to live in Castle Ravenloft.
351	The Demiplane of Dread forms as Barovia appears and Strahd becomes a vampire.
352	Strahd asserts his authority as Lord of Barovia.
398	Strahd tracks down and punishies the traitor, Leo Dilisnya.
400	First reappearance of Tatyana.
452	The vampire Jander Sunstar is drawn into Ravenloft.
470	The Vistana Madam Eva forges an alliance with Strahd von Zarovich.
528	Powerful heroes assault Castle Ravenloft, confront Strahd, and are killed.
542	Azalin the Lich enters Barovia ans the service of Strahd.
547	The domain of Forlorn is formed.
551	The domains of Har'Akir and Zherisia are formed.
564	The domain of Sebua is formed.
570	The domain of Kalidnay is formed.
575	The domains of Arak and Lamordia are formed.
579	The domain of Mordent is formed.
579	Azalin abandons Strahd, and Darkon is formed.
581	The domain of Bluetspur is formed.
583	The monster Adam abducts Elise.
588	The domain of Keening is formed.
590	The domain of Pharazia is formed.
593	The domain of Gundarak is formed.
600	The domain of Vechor is formed.
603	The domain of Invidia is formed.
610	Harkon Lukas enters Ravenloft.
613	The evil of Harkon Lukas is embraced as the domain of Kartakass is formed.
620	The domain of Timor is formed.
622	Catsle Thisteroinra is extended by Tristen ApBlanc in Forlorn.

625 The domain of Valachan is formed.
630 The Sea of Sorrows appears to the west of the Core.
635 The domains of Graben and Souragne are formed.
639 Lyssa von Zarovich becomes a vampire.
643 Ann Campbell lays a cures on Burton Westcote.
646 Avonleigh is drawn into Ravenloft.
682 The domain of Nova Vaase is formed.
683 The Nightmare Lands are formed, and Lamordia joins the Core.
684 The domain of Borce is formed.
689 Vlad Drakov enters Raveloft.
690 The domain of Falkovnia is formed.
691 The domain of Tepest is formed.
694 The domain of Richemulot is formed.
698 The domain of Markovia is formed.
700 The armies of Falkovnia attack Darkon but are repelled by legions of undead.
702 The domain of G'Henna is formed.
704 The armies of Falkovnia attack Darkon but are again repelled by legions of undead.
707 The domain of Dementlieu is formed.
708 The domain of Arkandale is formed.
711 For the third time, the armies of Falkovnia invade Darkon and are defeated.
711 Ivana Boritsi poisons her mother and becomes darklord or Borca.
714 The domain of Hazlan is formed.
715 The domain of Dorvinia is formed.
720 Lord Soth enters Raveloft.
720 The domain of Sithicus is formed.
722 Drakov's armies attempt a fourth invasion of Darkno and again fall before legions of undead.
722 The piper of Hamelyn attempts to rid STe. Ronges of rats and perishes.
726 Jaqueline Renier becomes darklord of Richemulot
729 Gabrielle Aderre kills Bakholis and become darklord of Invidia.
730 The domain of Verbrek is formed.
731 The domain of Vorostokov is formed.
732 The domain of Nosos is formed.
732 The domain of I'Cath is formed.
734 Rudolph van Richten vows to pursue and destroy the evil.
735 The Vistani seer Hyskosa records his Dire Prophecy predicting the Grand Conjunction.
735 Aurek and Dmitri Nuikin travel ro Richemulot and confort Jaqueline Renier.
735 The son of Leith sacrifices himself to destroy the Gathering Cloth.
736 The first of Hyskosa's prophecies comes to pass.
736 Duke Gundar is killed, and Gundarak is swallowed up by surrounding domains.
737 The second of Hyskosa's prophecies comes to pass.
737 Harkon Likas attempts to reconcile with his illegitimate son, Casimir.
738 The domain of Odiare forms.
738 The third of Hyskosa's prophecies comes to pass.

739 The High Master Illithid conspires with Lyssa von Zarovich to become lord of Bluetspur.
740 In the haste to bring about the Grand Conjunction, Azalin forces the last two elements of Hyskosa's Dire Prophecy to occur out of sentence. Thus, the Grand Conjunction collapses, and the Demiplane of Dread is not dispersed, although its geography is altered.
740 Saragossa, Sri Raji, and the Wildlands join together, forming the Steaming Lands Cluster.
741 The tomb of Sachemet is disturbed.
742 Roja attempts to usurp ruleship in Zherisia and fails
743 Baron Westcote is finally freed form his curse.
744 Adventures awaken Lord Soth form his enchanted trance.
744 Paridon and Timor join together to form Zherisia Cluster.
745 Malistroi the Nalfeshnee attempts to gain control of G'Henna.
746 Hak'AKir, Pharzia, and Sebua join together, forming the Amber Wastes cluster.
747 Mallocchio, son of Gabrielle Aderre, is revealed to be the next Dukkar.
747 Avonleigh, Nidalia, and Shadowborn Manor join together to from the Shadowborn Cluster.
748 Sylus Andropov is freed from the Nightmare Court.
748 The Night Terror is laid to rest.
749 The Grim Harvest begins as Azalin plots to escape Ravenloft. In an early test of processes tha Azalin hopes will make him a demilich, one of his agents is transformed into a terrible creature calling himself only Death.
749 The broken one Akanga leads a rebellion in Markovia.
750 Rudolph van Richten dies in final bettle with Madam Radanavich.
750 The Grim Harvest culminates as Azalin disappears, and the realm of Darkon is transformed into Necropolis. The creature calling himself Death claims ruleship of the new domain.
750 Vecna and Kas the Destroyer are drawn into Ravenloft, and Burning Peaks Cluster is formed.
750 The Noctural Sea and its islands appear to the east of the Core.

Geography

In most campaign settings, the features of the physical world are not unlike those of our own Earth, though there are elements of the fantastic to be considered. The magical world of Krynn, for example, has been tremendously altered by the great dragons who rule it. For all these changes, however, the world is still more or less Earthlike. Rivers flow from the mountains to the seas, the distant horizon limits the line of sight, and mountains form where tectonic plates crash together. These and many other absolutes govern the geography of Krynn, Faerun, Oerth, and most other known worlds.

The Demiplane of Dread, on the other hand, is not subject to such concerns. The Land of Mists is an artificial place created for an unknown purpose. No one knows who or what dictates reality in Ravenloft.

The Demiplane of Dread comprises several distinct regions. The most obvious of these are the Mists. It is from these vaporous swirls that the dark powers draw forth the prisons in which they confine the various domain lords. In this section, we shall examine those prisons and the macabre properties common to them all. Individual realms are described in Chapters Two, Three, and Four.

Realms of Horror

The domains of Ravenloft fall into four general categories: Pockets, Islands of Terror, Clusters, and the Core. Pockets are simply domains within other domains, while Islands are single realms completely surrounded by the Mists. The Clusters usually contain two to four domains and also float freely in the Mists. The Core is a continent of over twenty domains and two seas. It is by far the largest landmass in the Demiplane.

The Pockets

Pockets are the most minor of Ravenloft's terrible prisons. When a creature is first awarded a realm of its own, it is almost always a Pocket domain. While there are no set rules for establishing the physical boundaries of such a place, the Pockets share many similar characteristics.

A Pocket domain lies completely within the borders of another, larger domain. (However, the islands in the Sea of Sorrows and the Nocturnal Sea do not follow this rule. Those islands with independent darklords count as Core domains.) Further, a Pocket domain will always be ruled by a demilord. More powerful creatures will command larger regions like Islands or Core domains. Examples of fixed Pocket domains include Davion and the House of Lament.

Many Pockets are fleeting in nature. They appear from time to time, linger long enough to torment a handful of explorers, and then change again. If the demilord that rules the domain is slain, the Pocket domain breaks up and disintegrates. Those who were trapped there along with the demilord are generally returned to the region where they were prior to entering the Pocket domain.

Some Pocket domains are not even physically rooted to a geographical location. Those domains that move about are called Floating domains. Floating domains are always within the borders of another domain, but they do not necessarily conform to the laws of that domain. Examples of Floating domains include The Nightmare Lands and Scaena.

The Islands

Though larger than Pockets, Islands of Terror are still ringed on all sides by the Mists. Islands are also far more stable than Pockets, often lasting for years or decades before either breaking up or becoming part of a Cluster.

An Island realm is generally composed of a lair, which may once have been a Pocket domain, and the surrounding geographical region. In most cases, Islands are fairly small, but some are massive. The Island of Sri Raji, before becoming a part of the Steaming Lands Cluster, was nearly as large as some Core domains.

Examples of Islands include Bluetspur, Souragne, and Vorostokov.

The Clusters

In the wake of the Grand Conjunction, many a mysterious change has swept through the Demiplane of Dread. None is more fascinating, perhaps, than the appearance of Clusters. A Cluster is a gathering of domains which, on their own, would probably be classified as Islands of Terror. To be sure, most of the currently identified Clusters have been forged out of fragments that were previously Islands.

To date, there are five known Clusters and perhaps a good many more waiting to be discovered and explored. The identified Clusters are the Shadowborn, the Steaming Lands, the Amber Wastes, the Burning Peaks, and Zherisia.

The Core

The Core domains are the darkest of the dark. Indeed, when anyone speaks of the Demiplane of Dread, he is almost certainly thinking of the Core. The vast majority of the Core domains have a temperate climate and a more or less rugged, forested geography.

Some scholars, in light of the recent formations of the Clusters, insist that the Core itself is little more than a giant Cluster. However, the fact that this region is dominated by the darklords, the most powerful of all the prisoners of the Mists, indicates that the Core is more sinister than the Clusters or Islands of Terror. Further evidence that the Core is unique can be found in the fact that it appears to center around the domain of Barovia, home of Strahd von Zarovich and the first realm to rise from the Mists.

Domain Evolution

Sometimes, if a domain lord has proven his evil nature, his powers might even increase. Alternatively, domain lords have also been known to decrease in power. When either of these circumstances occur, the domain is transformed as well.

A perfect example of this evolution can be found in Daclaud Heinfroth (Dr. Dominiani). After the death of Gundar, former darklord of Gundarak, Dr. Dominiani took control of the domain. However, after the Grand Conjunction, he was not made darklord of Gundarak. Instead, he was rewarded with his own Island of Terror. The vile Dr. Dominiani found himself a lord, master of Dominia. At that time, his power extended only to the edge of his private sanitorium grounds. With the continuation of his work, however, he eventually became a darklord; his domain settled in the Sea of Sorrows, becoming one of the Core domains. It is worth noting that his domain was never a Pocket or part of any Cluster. Thus, it is obvious that no rigid progression exists from one type of lord to another.

The most recent domain evolution was the formation of Clusters, which began during the Grand Conjunction. Many of the Islands of Terror joined to form these Clusters. Exactly what force can draw two or more Islands together is not yet known. So far, it seems that all Clusters are composed of realms with a similar geography and climate. The exception to this, however, appears to be the Shadowborn Cluster, which was drawn together by the curse hanging over the Shadowborn bloodline.

Cultural Levels

The many domains of Ravenloft in common. All are refuges of ultimate darkness in which the accursed are forever doomed to suffer on their thrones. Each is a land of mystery and superstition, where the unwary are often short lived.

However, a great diversity also exists among the realms. In most cases, the nature of a domain is dictated by the land from which it was drawn. Sithicus, as an example, was uprooted and pulled into the Mists from the distant land of Ansalon on the planet Krynn. Because of this fact, Sithicus reflects the culture and technology of that place. Darkon, originally created for the lich lord Azalin, was forged in the image of his homeworld, Oerth.

The domains are all at different levels of technological advancement. In some domains, like Dementlieu, the natives easily understand and employ firearms. In others, like Har'akir, the most advanced weapon one is likely to encounter is a bronze sword. In order to help define the types of items that a group of adventurers can expect to purchase or be confronted with, a cultural level has been designated for each domain. It is important to note that these designations are intended only as guidelines to help the Dungeon Master design and referee adventures.



Definitions

The domains of Ravenloft are classified according to a system of cultural levels. The following table indicates the nine cultural levels and their approximate correlations to the progression of western civilization on our own world.

Table 1: Cultural Levels

Cultural Level	Approximate Historical Setting
Stone Age	10000-5000 B.C.
Bronze Age	5000-2500 B.C.
Iron Age	2500-1 B.C.
Classical	1-500 A.D.
Dark Age	500-800
Early Medieval	800-1200 A.D.
Medieval	1200-1400 A.D.
Chivalric	1400-1550 A.D.
Renaissance	1550-1700 A.D.

Stone Age

At the bottom end of the cultural scale are the stone-age domains. Admittedly, these are few and far between. When encountered, they are most often Islands of Terror or Pockets.

Adventurers exploring a stone-age domain will find, as the name implies, that no metalworking technologies exist. Flint and obsidian weapons are the rule here, with bows being the most advanced weapons heroes are likely to encounter. Spears and clubs are the dominant melee weapons.

Stone-age peoples have no written languages and seldom understand concepts like numbers or cause and effect, let alone philosophy or theology. Every natural event is a wonder to the inhabitants of such a domain, with superstition and mysticism governing almost all aspects of life.

From time to time, travelers in a stone-age domain will encounter shaman magic or primitive mysticism. Organized magic as wizards and priests understand it, however, will not be native to such realms.

One of the crowning achievements of inhabitants in a stone-age domain is the ability to make fire. Sometimes this is done with flint and tinder, but more often the fire drill or bow drill is used. The wheel has not yet made its appearance.

Agriculture and the domestication of animals can be found in stone-age domains. These are almost exclusively self-sustaining in nature. A family may grow some plants and have a domesticated animal or two, but the concept of large-scale farming and ranching has not been discovered. For this reason, almost all trade is done via a barter system. Apart from the fact that it is shiny, the average gold piece has no value in a stone-age domain.

Despite all these cultural shortcomings, many people are surprised to discover just how advanced stone-age domains can be in certain areas. The art of pottery, for instance, is often well understood by the craftsmen of such places. Similarly, adobe or pueblo-style housing is common. Horns, flutes, drums, and other simple musical instruments are regularly incorporated into celebrations and recreational gatherings.

Bronze Age

These domains are somewhat more common than stone-age ones, though still fairly rare. Current examples of bronze-age domains include Har'Akir and Sebua, lands of the Amber Wastes.

In these realms, metalworking has begun to make its mark. Bronze weapons and tools replace those fashioned of stone and wood. Other innovations include the beginnings of fixed measurements and mathematics. Basic tools like pulleys, levers, and potter's wheels are evident in all areas of life.

Written languages, generally pictographic and hieroglyphic in nature, are found in bronze-age cultures. Clay tablets form the earliest writing surfaces, but papyrus and other primitive forms of paper become standard for those who can afford them.

Organized religions are widespread, as is a decisive code of laws. Trade is common as more and more people specialize in one sort of work. Standardized currencies are still not in use, however, so barter remains the standard means of discharging debts and obligations. Gold, silver, gems, and other rare items become valuable as signs of wealth and power, though coins are still curious oddities.

Large-scale cities and constructs appear as the principles of architecture are laid down. Some surprisingly massive structures, like great pyramids, are constructed in bronze-age domains. On a similar note, the people of such realms have excellent calendars and a good understanding of basic astronomy.

Many things that most adventurers consider commonplace are not found in these realms. The concept of locks and keys, for example, has not yet been hit upon. The most advanced form of armor generally found in these places is studded leather, so those who wear any form of mail will be markedly out of place.

The practice of magic, both that of wizards and priests, has become standardized in bronze-age realms. Thus, a wizard from a more advanced domain will at least find something in common with the local magicians and clerics.

Iron Age

An iron-age culture has advanced far beyond its bronze-age predecessors. Obviously, the metalworking skills of these regions has given rise to weapons and tools made from iron, which are far more durable than those made of softer metals. An excellent example of a current iron-age domain is Forlorn.

With the advent of iron, military science takes a leap forward. Concepts like the shield wall are standard tactics, and weapons like the catapult appear. Biremes and triremes become the standard ocean going craft, with greater quinqueremes also being constructed.

Mathematics, astronomy, and other sciences become more advanced. Waterclocks, shadowclocks, and advanced calendars allow for fairly accurate measuring of time. Glass is manufactured, and devices like the water screw are used to irrigate fields. Manufacturing and other industries benefit from the use of waterwheels, windmills, and the winch.

Developments in language result in alphabets that make it practical to teach a higher percentage of citizens to read. This brings about cultural, theological, and philosophical advances, resulting in public theaters and libraries. The practice of medicine becomes standardized as well, although it is not particularly advanced and depends heavily on traditional cures and herbal remedies.

A currency of coins minted from precious metals becomes the standard means of measuring wealth and repaying debts. Adventurers used to trading via such measures will at last find a ready market for their gold and silver coins. Early locks and keys are also developed for the protection of valuable items.

Classical

Classical domains can be thought of as something of a dividing line. They separate the old world of primitive cultures from

the more advanced, medieval societies. The architecture of Demise (near the Isle of Agony in the Sea of Sorrows) reflects that of a classical society, although only Althea lives there now (see page 73 for more details). Other domains that fall into this period are Sri Raji and I'Cath. Although the metal-poor desert domain of Kalidnay lacks iron, it also falls into this category because of its other achievements.

A classical domain is marked by advancements in science and culture more than anything else. Literature, philosophy, and theology are all greatly improved in classical cultures. The invention of paper allows scrolls to be replaced by books, which are far more durable. Scholars assemble vast collections of knowledge to promote the advancement of science. Steel is widely used, resulting in a great improvement in weapons and armor.

Advances in construction and architecture lead to the widespread use of the arch. High quality roads facilitate travel and trade. Among the most commonly employed tools are cogs, levers, pulleys, screws, and wedges. Aqueduct systems supply water for urban or arid regions.

Military advances in these domains include large, organized armies composed of standardized smaller units and the introduction of heavy, armored cavalry. Fortified cities begin to emerge as engineering advances permit the construction of stronger gates and walls.

Mathematicians in these realms have an understanding of algebra and geometry. Magicians begin to experiment with alchemy, and the basis of later magical systems is in place.

Dark Age

In the wake of the classical period comes a time of slowed progress generally referred to as the dark ages. Many scholars believe such a period is the natural reaction to the extended time of philosophical and cultural growth marked by the classical period. The frigid domain of Vorostokov is an excellent example of a dark-age culture.

Advances in science and mathematics are noticeable in dark-age cultures, particularly in monasteries or other places devoted to study and education. Geometry, trigonometry, and algebra are very advanced in such regions. The astrolabe has been perfected by the scientists of these cultures and, in conjunction with detailed maps, allows for skilled navigation and ocean travel.

Crop rotation and improved agricultural technologies allow for the foundation of large farms. These supply grain to mechanical mills driven by water wheels or wind power and, in turn, can support large numbers of people.

Crossbows are first introduced in these cultures, as are suits of scale and banded mail. The latter makes troops more resistant to enemy weapons while the former are tremendously effective in piercing even the heaviest armor.

Early Medieval

Early medieval domains such as Tepest and Pharazia are not uncommon.

Early-medieval architecture features the gothic arch, which is much stronger than its rounded predecessors. Large cathedrals begin to appear as the squinch (a half-dome used to support larger domes) becomes more common. Architecture is dominated by the romanesque style.

Navigation becomes more reliable with the advent of the compass. Ships with stern-rudders replace earlier galleys. Advances in time keeping allow the creation of waterclocks.

Motte and bailey style castles are predominant here. Troops carry powerful bows or crossbows and wear chainmail armor. Fortified towers are also built in areas where danger threatens.

Medieval

The most common cultural level in the AD&D game, the medieval era is also the most frequently encountered stage of development for domains in Ravenloft. Barovia, Necropolis, Falkovnia, and many other domains fall into this category.

Large Saracen-style castles and fortresses are constructed in these regions, as are the siege engines needed to lay them low. Knights wearing plate armor and fine chain mail ride horses clad in heavy barding.

Buildings feature windows made from blown and flattened glass. Houses and lesser structures are made from wood frames and bricks. Stave churches dot rural areas, and great gothic cathedrals begin appearing in cities.

Chivalric

For those with an interest in military matters, chivalric domains can be recognized by their use of gunpowder. Richemulot, Invidia, and Borca are all examples of chivalric realms.

The use of gunpowder in these regions is generally restricted to large, fairly unreliable bombards. These weapons are not cast like later cannons, but are fashioned from wood or metal strips bound with iron hoops. The arquebus is employed, although it is far from common and almost as dangerous to its wielder as it is to the target.

Field-plate armor is used, although the introduction of firearms marks the eventual decline of such defenses. Heavy melee weapons give way to the lighter arms like the epee and rapier, which require more finesse and less brute strength to wield.

Large, reliable mechanical clocks begin to appear. Clockworks allow the creation of other machines and spring-driven devices. Magnetized needle compasses featuring compass rose cards and bearing sights appear on ships. Maps become even more refined with the introduction of portulan (port finding) charts. Ocean trade brings luxuries from distant shores. renaissance

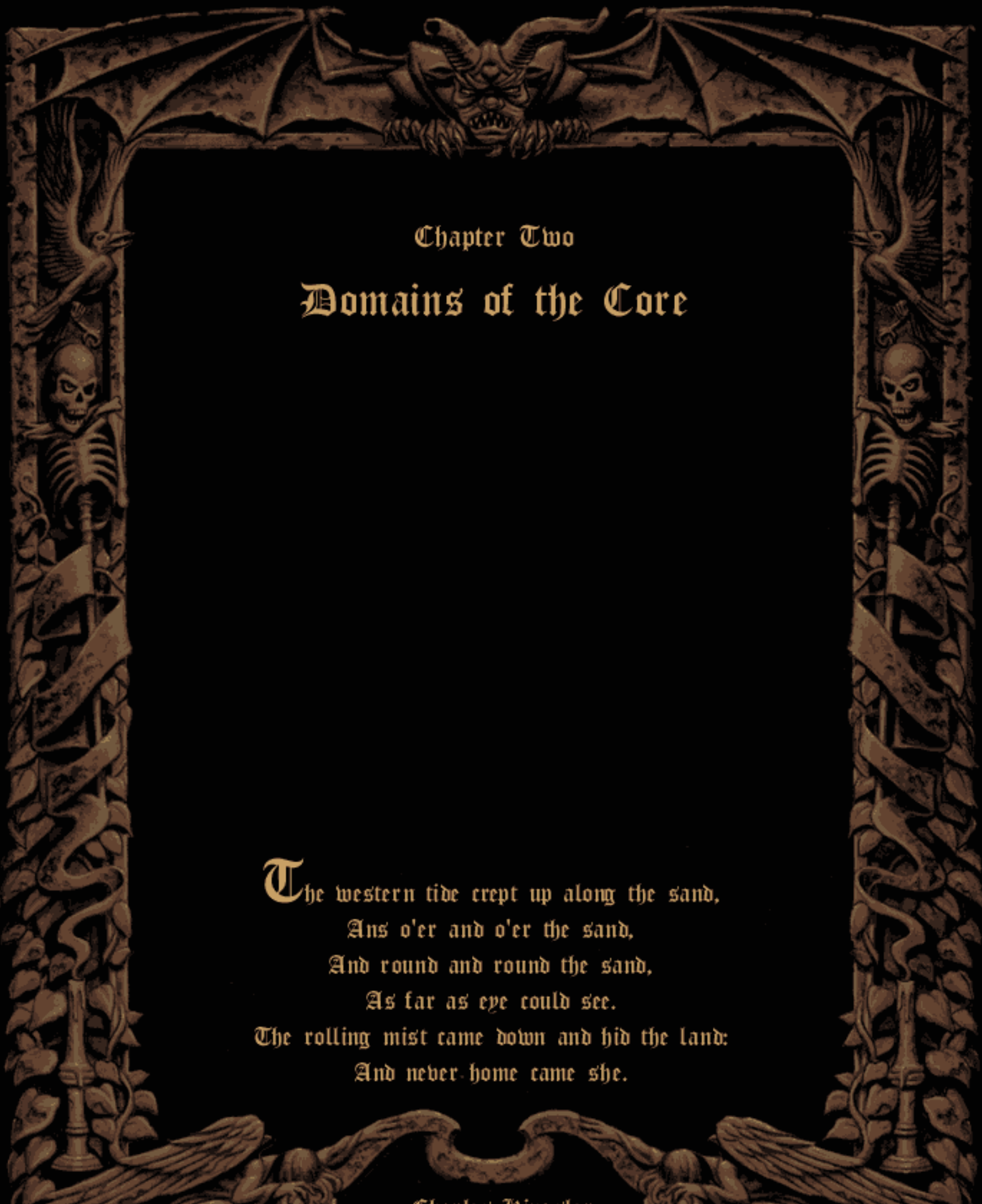
Renaissance

The most advanced of Ravenloft's domains are the renaissance cultures. These are marked by advances that push the limits of the AD&D game. Examples of these domains include Dementlieu, Lamordia, and Nosos.

Armor is uncommon in renaissance cultures, since firearms dominate warfare. Gunsmithing techniques allow the construction of matchlocks. Fencing replaces heavy swordplay and more brutal melee combat. Caravels and other large, naval vessels allow for long ocean voyages, and the gun carriage permits these vessels to carry cast-iron cannons.

Clockwork mechanisms lead to the manufacture of pocket watches and other small devices. In the most advanced of these realms, it is even possible to build time-fused explosive mines.

Large castles are seldom constructed in these domains, unless they are intended as a show of wealth or power. Just as gunpowder has made personal armor obsolete, so too has it rendered the castle indefensible.



Chapter Two

Domains of the Core

The western tide crept up along the sand,
Ans o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land:
And never home came she.


– Charles Kingsley
The Three Fishers

The next several chapters look at the majority of the known domains on the Demiplane of Dread. Emphasis has been given to those lands which are likely homelands for native player characters.

An Overview of the Core



The Core stands more or less as it did after the Grand Conjunction. However, a few major changes have occurred: The Mists over the southern part of the Sea of Sorrows have parted to reveal more of that dark body of water and a second body of water - the Nocturnal Sea - has appeared east of Nova Vaasa and Necropolis. The Mists still surround the entire continent, and what lies beyond them is unknown.

The Balinok Mountains divide the Core from north to south, interrupted midway by the Grand Conjunction's most curious legacy, the Shadow Rift. The spectacular peaks of the Balinoks soar to extremes of nearly ten thousand feet. The lands west of the Balinoks, sandwiched between the mountains and the Misty Border, are covered with thick forest. To the east of the peaks. Nova Vaasa is mostly barren or grassy. Only one major road crosses the Balinoks: the Old Svalich Road in Barovia. Timori Road used to connect the East and the West through Tepest, but the Shadow Rift has permanently closed that passage. Other crossings through the Balinoks are possible but treacherous.

Three major rivers run through the lands north and west of the Balinoks: the Vuchar, the Musarde, and the Arden. The Vuchar travels from east to west across the northern plains of Necropolis. Strangely enough, parts of the river flow from the Nocturnal Sea, but it also seems to derive from an unknown source beyond the Mists. The Musarde River flows from tributaries in Forlorn and Hazlan, carving a lush valley. The Musarde and the Arden are major trade arteries of the Core.

The Arden River flows out of Valachan, tracing a northerly path through Sithicus and Verbrek before passing back into Valachan and on to Mordent. Before the Grand Conjunction, it was popularly believed that the Arden flowed directly out of the Mists, though the Vistani have always insisted that Valachan held its source.

Politics of the Core

Up until the last five years, the mercantile and political situation in the Core was quite stable. Aside from periodic invasions of Darkon by Falkovnia, there were no major conflicts or political animosities between the domains.

Dementlieu, Mordent, Richemulot, and Borca have been trade partners and allies for decades, forming mutual defense pacts against the military threat of Falkovnia. The fact that these domains speak dialects of the same tongue has made them natural allies.

Barovia, Invidia, and Kartakass have similar trading arrangements, although their pacts are somewhat looser. Most trade between these domains takes place via the Musarde River and its tributaries.

Falkovnia, despite its militaristic and isolationist stance, is something of a breadbasket for the Core. The domain possesses huge grainfields, and these harvests are transported to Falkovnian merchant enclaves in other domains and sold there.

At one time, Darkon was a major factor in the Core's trading environment. Like Falkovnia, the nation was a supplier of grain to other domains, and the city of Martira Bay was the site of Darkon's finest shipyard. Since the disappearance of Azalin, the future of his domain is uncertain. The dissolution of Darkon and creation of Necropolis, as citizens of the Core now call the land that was once Darkon, is one of several events causing the peaceful relations and steady trade to deteriorate.

A progression of political chaos began twenty-one years ago, when the half-Vistani sorceress Gabrielle Aderre murdered Lord Bakholis of Invidia. Without his iron fist keeping merchants in line, the nation quickly disintegrated as the nobles bickered about who would lead it.

Then, fourteen years ago, Duke Gundar of Gundarak was assassinated. Gundarak's territory was claimed by Strahd of Barovia, with the exception of the western most part of the country and Gundar's former seat of power (Castle Hunadora), which are now part of Invidia. The former Gundarakites are an oppressed minority in Barovia and a constant source of trouble for the burgomasters who handle the day-to-day rulership of the communities for Count Strahd.

A decade ago, the Grand Conjunction threw the land into turmoil, and the nations of Markovia and G'Henna vanished entirely. Because G'Henna imported a great deal of grain from both Darkon and Falkovnia, its disappearance was a blow to their economies. Further, the people of Tepest, blaming foul magic for the destruction of their neighbors, launched a fearful crusade against anyone suspected to be "fairy folk". Their crusade continues to this day, and Tepest is a dangerous place for both nonhumans and magic users of any kind.

Six years ago, trouble brewed in Invidia again: A violent despot known as Malocchio Aderre rose to prominence. Over the last few years, he has pulled Invidia together into a coherent nation through terror and force of arms. He has a rabid hatred of Vistani, and the cutthroats that serve as his army attack all Vistani caravans. Even more significantly, his forces have started to go after the Vistani in Barovia, Borca, and Sithicus, sometimes actually venturing deep into those other domains.

Ivan Dilisnya, commander of Borca's militia, has issued warnings to Malocchio Aderre that the next invasion of Borca will result in armed retaliation. It is quite possible that Borca's allies will somehow get involved in such a conflict. Further, rumors hold that the Vistani in Sithicus are under the personal protection of Lord Soth. If the Invidian raiders have incurred his wrath, armies could be amassing even now.

Finally, last year, a great explosion killed the entire population of Il Aluk. King Azalin has vanished, and some of the domain's more powerful denizens have claimed portions of Necropolis as their personal lands. Vlad Drakov attempted to take advantage of his neighboring domain's instability, attacking a mere two months after the destruction of II Aluk. However, he was again repelled by legions of undead. Grain production is down, causing food shortages in Lamordia and Dementlieu, and it appears as though Lord Drakov might be staging another invasion attempt.

As tension mounts among the leaders of the Core domains and war looms on the horizons, the commoners are starting to realize that their dreary existences may well become a lot worse.

The Domains in Detail

The following pages describe each domain of the Core. The first and second sections of this chapter detail (from west to east) the domains of the Northern and Southern Core, respectively. The third section describes the Western Sea, and the last section of this chapter contains information on the Eastern Sea. Each entry contains maps and basic information about the domain's cities, towns, geography, trade endeavors, people, encounters, and domain lord.



Cities and Villages: Whenever a population for a city or village is provided, the number includes only those who live within its limits. As a rule, an equal number of people reside in the immediate area surrounding the city. Villages housing fewer than one thousand people may not be shown on the maps.

Roads: The maps show only major roads, those which are heavily traveled or serve as trade routes. Most roads are not paved, but the locals try to keep them in good repair. Many crude paths and rugged dirt roads also crisscross the domains, leading to tiny villages and remote homesteads. The maps do not include these smaller byways.

Incidental Encounters: No meeting should happen by chance in a RAVENLOFT game. Horror requires a carefully structured sequence of events, and battling wandering monsters is merely a distraction. On the other hand, the Dungeon Master may wish to introduce a few incidental encounters with native creatures to establish setting and mood.

Each domain entry contains suggestions for what creatures might be used for these incidental encounters. Creatures other than those we suggest can be used as well, but they should be chosen to enhance the story and atmosphere, not just for their fighting abilities.

The Borders: Domain borders represent physical as well as political boundaries. Usually, the borders are open and indistinguishable to the average traveler. At the whim of the darklord, however, they may close and prevent escape. The method of closing varies from domain to domain. In some, the Mists rise, and those who attempt to leave simply find themselves back within the domain. In others, the land sprouts a wall of skulls or gives rise to an impenetrable barrier of fire. The common folk know of these strange phenomena, so most natives avoid settling too close to domain borders.

Northeastern core



Northwestern core



This section contains information on Lamordia, Dementlieu, Necropolis, Falkovnia, Keening, and Tepest.

Lamordia

The Land: Lamordia is a coastal domain in the northwestern section of the Core. A relentless, cold wind usually blows out of the northwest, lashing Lamordia with its fury. In winter, ice floes clog the harbors, and great frozen slabs rear up on the rocky shore. It is not uncommon for Lamordia to be consumed by a blizzard while Necropolis suffers only a drizzle and Dementlieu's skies are clear. In late spring, Lamordia's roads become rivers of deep, clinging mud. In the short, warm summers, clouds of mosquitoes drift across the domain, plaguing the deer and elk. A forested ridge called the "Sleeping Beast" stretches along the eastern border of this domain, sheltering Falkovnia from most of Lamordia's storms.

Lamordia reaches far into the Sea of Sorrows, and several islands off the northern tip of the domain are included in the lands controlled by Adam, the darklord. The Isle of Agony, the largest of these islands, is his usual hideout.

During low tide in summer, a muddy causeway links the islands to the mainland. At that time, it is possible to walk the causeway, but progress is slow, and the mud can swallow a full-grown man to his waist or deeper if he is not careful. Seabirds add to a hiker's worries by diving, harassing, and occasionally even attacking. When the tide is high, water covers the causeway, but in winter, jutting slabs of ice link the isles to the mainland. Still, to cross the ice safely, travelers need ropes and ice picks.

Lamordia has two major settlements: Ludendorf and Neufurchtenburg, each housing fewer than one thousand people. As in other domains, travelers will encounter isolated huts in the wilderness, but the region's harsh conditions attract very few immigrants.

Lamordians are extremely fearful of the Isle of Agony. Some claim it is home to a man-eating sea monster. Others call it "the devil's domicile". No one, not even adventurous young boys, will explore the island willingly.

Cultural Level: Renaissance.

The Folk: Lamordians are tall and fair skinned, with eyes of blue or green and hair ranging from light blond to dark brown. They favor dark, woolen clothing. These independent, hardy folk have learned to withstand the winters in good spirits. Blizzards may keep them indoors, but snow itself is no hindrance. They travel on skis, sleighs, and snowshoes.

The language of Lamordia is different than any other spoken in the Core. The Lamordian spoken language is similar enough to that of Dementlieu that it is easily learned, but it is virtually impossible for a born and bred Lamordian to speak Balok, the language of Barovia, without a heavy accent.

Several trappers live in isolated areas of the domain, as do a few miners, and some shepherds winter their animals on the leeward side of the Sleeping Beast. However, most Lamordians are craftsmen. They spend the winter months carving furniture and building musical instruments. As soon as the snow melts and the roads are passable, their work is exported to other lands. The goods bring an excellent price, a third of which goes to Baron von Aubrecker.

The Lamordian diet is rich in protein and fat. A special pudding thickened with sheep's blood is a local favorite, and goat cheese is a dietary staple.

Native Player Characters: Lamordia has no native priest characters. Most Lamordians hold one of two viewpoints:

Either the gods created life and then withdrew from the world, or gods are the manifestations of superstitious, hopeful minds looking toward an external source for release from their troubles. Lamordians always look for the down-to-earth explanation. While the domain has churches and a small clergy, none of these priests receive spells. Even they assume that the gods have no care for the mundane existence of humanity. Instead, they see their duty as preparing the spirits of their parishioners for the afterlife.

All other classes allowed in the RAVENLOFT setting are found here. Lamordian natives receive a free, crafts-oriented nonweapon proficiency from the General list, and warrior and rogue characters may devote weapon proficiency slots to firearms.

Personalities of Note: The tragic Dr. Victor Mordenheim toils endlessly in his castle, his family estate falling into disrepair around him. Those who have managed to get close to the doctor know that his wife was horribly mangled many years ago when one of his experiments went awry. He seeks tirelessly to cure her.

Baron von Aubrecker and the natives of Lamordia believe the history of their land reaches back to the beginnings of time, but until Dr. Mordenheim and his creation Adam became part of the land, Lamordia did not exist in the Demiplane.

Schloss Mordenheim, the estate of Victor Mordenheim, is north of Ludendorf, on the coast. The estate stands on a cliff, which is dotted with small caves. In spring and summer, the waves crash against the rocks below. Locals avoid this place both because the manor has a reputation for being haunted and because the doctor has a reputation for conducting strange experiments and accidentally allowing deformed beasts to escape from his laboratory. Nearby residents tolerate the doctor, but they do not really like him.

The Law: Baron von Aubrecker, an aristocrat whose family has ruled Lamordia for as long as anyone can remember, maintains his seat of power in a castle perched on the Sleeping Beast, several miles south of Ludendorf. He rules with a light touch, collecting taxes through the mayors of Ludendorf and Neufurchtenburg, while otherwise allowing them to rule the towns as they think best.

Von Aubrecker maintains a token army of 1st-level mounted fighters, equipped with muskets and broadswords, near the Falkovnian border. Monsters are few in Lamordia, and folk are peaceful and law abiding, so Ludendorf and Neufurchtenburg need only maintain small police forces. Whenever some particularly violent or heinous crime is perpetrated, the people often take justice into their own hands.

Encounters: Few monsters roam about in Lamordia. The most common predators are wolves and bears, but they keep to the heights of the Sleeping Beast. The most dangerous encounters will be with flesh golems - escaped subjects of Dr. Mordenheim's experiments. Character have a 25% chance for an encounter once each day and once each night.

Further Reading: Dr. Mordenheim appears in the adventure anthology *Book of Crypts*, and heroes can square off against the doctor's most successful experiment and the monstrous lord of Lamordia in the adventure module *Adam's Wrath*. The tale of Mordenheim himself is revealed in the novel *Mordenheim*.

Darklord of Lamordia

The darklord of Lamordia is Dr. Mordenheim's most successful experiment in creating life thus far. The monster, named Adam, shares his land and curse with Dr. Mordenheim, although Adam is actually the domain's lord.

Adam
Flesh Golem, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	10	Str	20
Movement	15	Dex	17
Level/Hit Dice	12	Con	20
Hit Points	55	Int	16
THAC0	9	Wis	12
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	2
Damage/Attack	2d8		
Special Attacks	Nil		
Special Defences	Need +1 or better weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	25%		

The monster Adam is a patchwork of body parts from different human corpses - each part perfect, the whole grotesque. Large, raised scars crisscross his body and face. This enormous, tremendously powerful man stands more than seven feet tall.

Adam's pale, gray skin is too thin to conceal the play of muscles and arteries underneath. His raven black hair flows long and wild, and at the edge of his eyes and mouth, the skin is bluish and shrivelled. Thin, straight, black lips frame his perfect, pearly white teeth. His small, watery, blue eyes seem loosely anchored in their sockets, barely covered by his eyelids.

Background: Dr. Victor Mordenheim created Adam from the parts of many dead men and gave him life. At first, the creature acted childlike, but Mordenheim had unknowingly infused it with an evil spirit. As Adam grew older, he became increasingly cruel. Finally, the dark powers drew Lamordia into the Demiplane of Dread when Adam murdered the doctor's wife Elise, kidnapped their adopted daughter Eva, and fled into the Mists. That night, he became the true lord of Lamordia, and the land welcomed him.

Current Sketch: As the most powerful being in his domain, Adam has complete control of its borders. He is not Lamordia's political leader and is even considered to be nothing more than a tale told to frighten naughty children. Adam lives as a recluse, usually dwelling in a cave on the Isle of Agony. He is immune to cold and needs little food or water to sustain him. Hence, he can live as wildly and freely as an animal. However, he does not want to be a beast; he wants to be human. He is bitter and frustrated, and sometimes his pent up emotions give way to violence and evil.

Adam despises Dr. Mordenheim but cannot bring himself to harm his creator. The land has bound them together in both body and spirit. The monster feels the doctor's physical pain, and the doctor, in turn, shares the monster's eternal anguish.

Closing the Borders: When Adam wishes to seal his domain, a driving blizzard hurls back any who attempt to leave. These frigid storms have been known to rage even at the height of Lamordia's short summer.

Combat: As the true lord of Lamordia, Adam has been granted many powers by the land. He is immune to natural cold and electricity, but suffers half damage from magical attacks of this type. Other damaging spells harm him normally. He absorbs spells that do not cause immediate damage, using their energy to regenerate hit points (1 point for each level of the spell).

Adam is also immune to normal weapons and physical attacks. Only magical weapons can harm him.

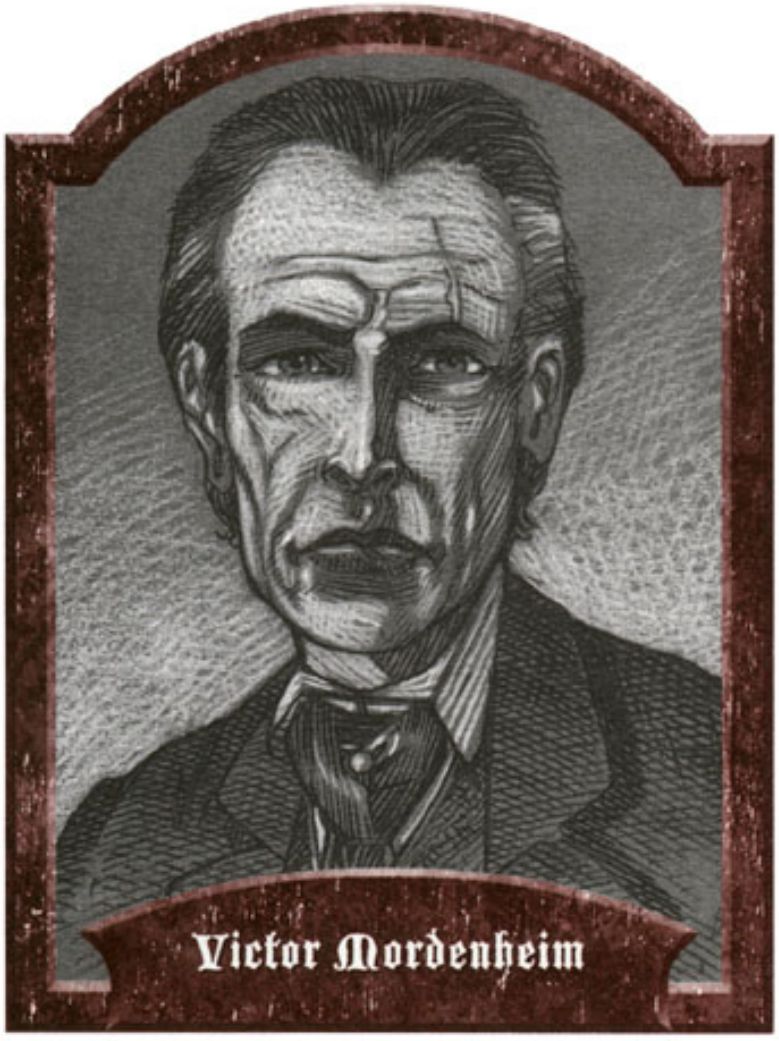
The monster resembles neither a common flesh golem nor a lumbering dolt with neck bolts. He is extremely nimble, swift, and clever, using the terrain to superb advantage. He is also willing to retreat if danger is present, allowing the land and its shadows to conceal him. Time is meaningless to Adam, and he can always return another day.

The monster prefers guerilla tactics over full frontal assaults. Like a thief, he can hide in shadows and move silently with an 80% chance of success. He can also detect noise and climb walls with the same odds. While moving silently, his movement rate is halved. If his magic resistance blocks an opponent's spell, he may pretend that the spell has worked, using the falsehood to position himself for an escape or surprise attack. However, he has only a 50% chance of knowing which spell has been cast upon him.

Adam is tightly linked to his creator, Dr. Mordenheim. He can feel any pain inflicted on the doctor, though it does not affect his ability to fight or move.

Victor Mordenheim
0-Level Human, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	10	Str	10
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/Hit Dice	0	Con	9
Hit Points	55	Int	18
THAC0	20	Wis	7
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	12
Damage/Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Nil		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	Nil		



Mordenheim, a scientist and surgeon, appears to be thirty-four years of age. He is six feet tall and has a wiry, if not athletic, stature. His sharp, pronounced features belie an aristocratic background. Though his face is still relatively young, an intense obsession with his work has grayed his hair, so only a few streaks of the original brown remain. A meager diet and reclusive lifestyle have left his skin pale. His blue eyes are tired and muddied, rarely blinking, and he has a constant preoccupied look about him.

Tension plagues Dr. Mordenheim. His tight facial muscles sometimes twitch, and his lips never relax in a smile. The tendons on the back of his hands are taut and raised, and the thin dry skin covering his knuckles is as white as the bones below. He is a man on the edge, but even when extremely agitated, he never loses his temper.

Mordenheim has a distinguishing scar and two small deformities. A fall from a tree at age five left a scar on his forehead that is still faintly visible today. Also, his left earlobe is missing due to another childhood mishap. At the age of ten, he was attempting to perform simple exploratory surgery on his father's favorite hound. The dog, not fully drugged by the bowl of wine that young Victor provided, retaliated the moment its skin was cut. Victor's father refused to have the boy's dangling earlobe reattached. Instead, he instructed the family doctor to remove the lobe completely as a lesson to the little surgeon. At

the age of twenty-three, Mordenheim accidentally severed the tip of his own left ring finger when using a surgical saw - a mishap for which he chides himself to this day.

Dr. Mordenheim wears only simple, practical brown woolen suits, never any of the frills or embellishments others of his social status might acquire. In his lab, he dons a surgical gown to protect his garments from blood and other fluids. He wears no jewelry other than a ring with his family crest and a gold watch that was given to him by his wife.

Background: Mordenheim is a gifted scientist and surgeon who became obsessed with the pursuit of knowledge at an early age. While other boys played make-believe, Victor studied the sciences, both modern and arcane. He disdained magic, however, deeming it "a diversion from Truth".

At age twenty-one, Mordenheim married Elise von Brandthofen, much to the surprise of his family and his handful of friends. Were it not for Elise's own persistence, he would never even have met, much less married, her. She was an unusual and intelligent young woman who shared his interest (though not his passion) for chemistry. Unfortunately, she was barren and could not give him children.

Only a few months after marrying Elise, Victor began his research into the resurrection - or more appropriately, the creation - of human life. Thirteen years later, he accomplished his goal and created a monster. Still, although Mordenheim discovered virtually every piece of the puzzle he pursued, the actual spark, the true wonder, was not of his own accomplishment. He was dabbling in the work of gods, and the gods, in turn, dabbled in his.

Mordenheim neither worshiped nor believed in any power higher than man. He was a learned atheist who accepted only that which could be proven. If he revered anything, it was knowledge. At other times, the gods might have tolerated such blasphemy, but Mordenheim had become a festering sore to their sensibilities. So fierce became his desire to create life, so strong his denial of their existence, that the gods decided to grant his wish. They imbued his foul corpse with a twisted, troubled soul, rife with evil intent.

On the night the monster first drew breath, Ravenloft's misty fingers began to tingle with anticipation. In the months that followed, they settled into the soil about Mordenheim's castle, until at last they rose from the earth and surrounded it in a kind of deathwatch. When all hope of Mordenheim's redemption was past, the Mists withdrew from that primal realm, taking with them the castle and all the players in Mordenheim's deadly plot.

Victor delighted in his creation, regarding "Adam" as the child he and his barren wife could never have, but Adam showed an unnatural affection for Elise that terrified and repulsed her. Even when, two years after Adam's creation, Victor introduced a playmate to his creation (a seven-year-old, half-starved orphan whom he had found in an alley near Ludendorf's docks), the situation did not improve. Adam seemed jealous of the attention young Eva (as Mordenheim had named her) received. Such was his antagonism toward the girl that Elise threatened to leave her husband and take Eva away if his attempts to encourage Adam's "social adjustment", using Eva as an experimental tool, were not stopped.

An ordinary man might have heeded the pleas of his wife, but Victor was drunk with the power of his newfound knowledge. His attempts to socialize and educate Adam continued.

One night, Victor's world came crashing down upon him. Awakened by screams, he rushed to Eva's bedroom, only to find the girl missing and his wife in a crumpled heap beside the bed. Looming over her was the monstrous Adam, holding a bloody scrap of Eva's nightgown. Then, with a furious roar, Adam disappeared into the misty night.

Elise was still alive - but just barely. It was clear she would die within the hour unless drastic measures were taken. Now Dr. Mordenheim faced a new challenge: maintaining the spark of life in the woman he loved.

Victor worked feverishly, trying to restore Elise to health. Despite all his efforts, he was barely able to keep her alive. She

remained little more than a ragged corpse, in need of ever more complicated machinery to sustain her.

Current Sketch: To the local inhabitants, Dr. Mordenheim is a fiendish madman who conducts unholy experiments in a castle by the sea. They fear him and credit him with powers he does not actually possess. They also credit him with crimes he does not commit. It is true, however, that he robs the graveyards and haunts the hospices in search of newly-dead, feminine bodies. He has, perhaps, even arranged a gentle death or two, using poisons that cause no pain and leave nary a trace. Still, he does not kidnap specimens that are yet warm. That, unknown to most of the populace and even Mordenheim himself, is the work of his brainchild, the monster he named Adam.

Mordenheim's days (and many of his nights) are still devoted to his science, but he no longer seeks to revive the dead. He seeks to restore the living. Elise - or what is left of her - still breathes in his laboratory. Compelled by remorse, and what must truly be madness, he intends to provide her with a new body that all but surpasses perfection. She has regained consciousness only twice since her fateful encounter with Adam. In those brief, moments she cried out for her adopted daughter Eva (whom the monster kidnapped after he attacked Elise) and begged Victor to release her from torment. Her heart continues to beat, but not of its own accord. She lives solely through the intervention of Mordenheim's contraptions. Thanks to the dark powers, he has been striving to revive Elise for centuries now, something which the Lamordians seem strangely unaware of. It is as though they don't notice that Mordenheim remains in his thirties while generations come and go.

Since his creation of Adam, Victor has never again truly revived the lifeless or completely reconstructed the hopelessly maimed. While he has been able to construct several lesser beings - twisted and stupid flesh golems - he has not been able to match the success he had with Adam, nor has he been able to create the vision of loveliness he wants to build for Elise. Without the intervention of the gods that spurn him, he never will. Perhaps some part of him knows this, but in his endless quest for perfect parts and his eternal wait for the perfect moment, he is able to deny the truth: His work is a failure, Elise is gone from him forever, and he is as much her murderer as the wretch who struck her down.

Combat: Dr. Mordenheim is not likely to start a fight. He is a surgeon and has no weapon skills. However, his link to the monster has given him a strange defensive ability. He cannot die unless the monster dies. In fact, he has the hit points of the monster, and his body will similarly regenerate from the slightest piece of flesh. Meanwhile, the pain from his wounds is simultaneously felt by the monster. If Mordenheim's body disintegrates completely, his spirit will seek out the fresh corpse of another human male. Within a week, the new body will change to look just like Dr. Mordenheim.

Dementlieu

The Land: Dementlieu is a coastal domain on the Sea of Sorrows. Port-a-Lucine, the domain's largest settlement and capital, sits on the shore of Parnault Bay. This walled town of five thousand people with clean streets and neatly arrayed townhouses is built around a small fortress. The fortress has been seized by the government, however, since no owner has stepped forward to claim it. The guilds of Port-a-Lucine have made recent attempts to turn the fortress into a joint headquarters, but a rash of accidents made them abandon that project. The neutral temple of the Church of Ezra is located on the outskirts of Port-a-Lucine.

Nearby lies Chateaufaux, a trade village along the eastern border with some fifteen hundred inhabitants. At one time, the town was home to almost two thousand souls, but hundreds of citizens left for Port-a-Lucine or other domains when the mayor of the town lost his mind.

Dementlieu is a flat land that grows progressively more hilly as one travels northward to Lamordia. The land is covered by forests and heaths, and the earth is sandy. The only things that grow properly in Dementlieu's soil are potatoes.

Cultural Level: Renaissance.

The Folk: On the surface, the people of Dementlieu are among the most civilized people in the entire Demiplane. They produce some of the finest portraits and landscape paintings in the Core, and as a group, they are logical and guided by a belief in scientific principles. Additionally, the people of Dementlieu try their best to take care of the poor, so most citizens have both food and shelter. Still, despite their progressive appearance, most gentry treat the poor as slaves to be ordered about. Poverty, disease, crime, and even murder are common at the lower levels of society. The gentry of Dementlieu set the fashion trends for the stylish inhabitants of the Core. Currently, the men of the domain wear dark woolen pants and cotton shirts or silk shirts with tailed coats. Gentlemen wear black top hats, while men of the lower classes wear simple cloth caps.

Most women wear somber-colored, long dresses, high-button boots, and hats. Women of the lower classes wear simple bonnets, but the hat of a lady is large brimmed and elaborate.

The language of Dementlieu is the same as that which is spoken in Mordent. Similar dialects are spoken in Richemulot and Borca, and it is a language that students learn at the finer boarding schools of Ravenloft.

Native Player Characters: Dementlieu is a genteel realm where resolving disagreements through violence is frowned upon. Most player characters from this domain are rogues. Wizards are few and far between, and most of those who dwell here are enchanters or illusionists. (This kind of magic is used mostly for entertainment.) Warriors and rogues from Dementlieu may use weapon proficiency slots on firearms if the player is so inclined. This is also a highly literate domain, so each native hero receives the reading/writing proficiency for free.

Personalities of Note: If a citizen or visitor to Dementlieu wants to expedite dealings with the law and government, it is well known that the man to speak with is Dominic d'Honaire, leader of the lord-governor's advisery counsel. A pleasantly-humored man in his early fifties, D'Honaire lives near the lord-governor's palace in Port-a-Lucine and has his ear in all matters. D'Honaire's wife recently bore him his first son.

Another important figure is Dr. Vilhelm Mikki, one of the Core's most famous specialists in nervous disorders and mental illnesses. He runs a sanatorium located in the tranquil countryside outside Chateaufaux.

The Law: Dementlieu is ruled by lord-governor Marcel Guignol. He is assisted by a council of five advisers, which is headed by the aforementioned D'Honaire. The lord-governor writes laws and adjudicates important trials.

The city militia helps the lord-governor and his advisers enforce the law. Most of them are 2nd-level fighters equipped with studded leather armor, short swords, and whips.

Encounters: Dementlieu itself does not have many monsters, but deer are fairly common in the wooded areas. A small community of kobolds exists in the northern hills near the border of Lamordia. Also, a few evil marine creatures. like reavers and sea spawn (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium) . have been known to prey upon the land dwellers, but this is an uncommon occurrence. Typically, characters have only a 15% chance for an encounter here, day or night.

Further Reading: The AD&D Historical Campaign Reference *A Mighty Fortress* is a treasure trove of inspiration for running adventures in cultures at the same level as Dementlieu. The domain itself is featured in the *Chilling Tales* anthology.

Darklord of Dementlieu

Dominic d'Honaire
7th-Level Human Enchanter,
Neutral Evil



Armor Class	10	Str	9
Movement	12	Dex	11
Level/Hit Dice	7	Con	10
Hit Points	18	Int	17
THAC0	18	Wis	12
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	7-14
Damage/Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Dominic is about five feet seven inches tall and slightly plump. He pulls back his graying red hair into a short, well-groomed ponytail and wears a neatly trimmed beard and mustache. He can control his apparent Charisma, allowing it to range from 7 to 14. His usual score is about 11.

Background: Dominic is the grandson of Dr. Germain d'Honaire, a mesmerist who was in Mordent when it became part of Ravenloft. Dominic's mother died in childbirth.

Even as a child, Dominic could suggest an idea so subtly, so skillfully, that most people would believe it was their own. Often he would pit one person against another, sometimes causing serious damage but never taking the blame himself. The more chaos, anger, and hate his intrigues generated, the happier Dominic became. He was a handsome child, especially flirtatious with the ladies, who found his behavior harmless and charming. These women lavished affection on the poor, motherless boy, not suspecting how twisted and advanced his little mind actually was.

When his grandfather died, the family decided to leave Mordent. This was actually Dominic's idea, although his father

Claude thought it was his own. Claude decided to brave the Mists of Ravenloft and see where they took them. New lands opened up for little Dominic. Unbeknownst to his family, he became the darklord of a new domain, Dementlieu.

Current Sketch: Dominic is a master manipulator and schemer. He lives like a spider weaving a complex web of plots. Like most domain lords, Dominic received a curse along with his lands. The more romantically attracted he becomes to a woman, the uglier she finds him. To others, his appearance is unchanged, but to her, he becomes repulsive. The curse leaves him bitter and frustrated. He actually killed his first love in anger, for she could not bear the sight of him. Thus, his marriage is one of political convenience, with no emotional bonds.

Closing the Borders: D'Honaire can seal his domain with a mirage. Standing at the border, a character sees the lands of Dementlieu before and behind him. No matter which way the would-be escapee walks, he moves farther into the domain. In a forest, characters might not notice the effect until they emerge from the woods to find themselves back where they started. At the coast, the Sea of Sorrows disappears from view.

Combat: Dominic has the combat abilities and spell effects of a 7th-level enchanter, but he cannot actually cast spells. Rather, his voice can act as a *suggestion* spell at any time, and his gaze can act as a *domination* spell. Dominic himself is completely immune to any sort of mental attack. He avoids personal combat at all costs and has several powerful protectors who will fight for him if necessary.

Necropolis

The Land: Formerly known as Darkon, Necropolis was recently devastated when Azalin's doomsday device sent out a wave of negative energy, turning the city of II Aluk into a city of undead. Not much else is known about the present state of Il Aluk, since any living creature that enters the city automatically dies. Strangely enough, moments after the disaster, every inhabitant of the Core knew that the land was to be called Necropolis from then on.

Necropolis occupies the northern third of the Core, stretching from the Sea of Sorrows in the west to the Nocturnal Sea in the east. Necropolis is a heavily populated realm, with a wide diversity of races represented.

This domain is divided into six distinct regions. In each region, the wave of negative energy thrown off by the *doomsday device* has had a different effect, though none so drastic as that of II Aluk, which was wiped free of every living creature. Throughout Necropolis, much remains as it was before this terrible tragedy.

The Boglands - This vast bog is dotted with many lakes, the largest collection of which is known as the Great Salt Swamp. These lakes are so salty as to be undrinkable and devoid of all life. In contrast, Stagnus Lake is filled with living creatures and even boasts a top layer of green scum that heaves as these creatures move beneath it. Those who venture into the bogs face a number of dangers, including poisonous creatures and explosive gases.

Root crops grown in this region are disturbingly misshapen, giving rise to rumors that those who eat this produce will be somehow cursed. One harvest of carrots shaped like fiends almost caused a riot. Because of this, much of the produce is left to rot, seriously depleting the local food supply.

The Forest of Shadows - This formerly lush forest has taken on quite a sinister atmosphere, with shirting shadows, giant spiders, and watchful creatures. At several locations, foresters have discovered rough circles of large stones. It is said that during the full moon, werewolves perch on the rocks and howl. It is also said that those who hear this eerie chorus cannot resist the call and are drawn to the circle. Also, since the transformation of Il Aluk, the Vuchar river directly west of it has become devoid of life. Dead fish float on its surface, and the water has a sour, stagnant smell.

The Forest of Shadows has two major towns: Nartok, a cosmopolitan trading center where the merchandise of Necropolis is assembled before being shipped south to Falkovnia, and Rivalis, a halfling community. The former home of Azalin, Castle Avernus, also lies within this region. Since the lich lord's disappearance, it is presumably empty, but none are brave enough to verify this fact.

The Jagged Coast - This region has many tiny islands and secret coves and is the base for a number of illicit smuggling operations. It is also rumored to contain great, trap-laden treasure caches. Most of the coastline is a barren expanse of rock and scrub. However, in the north lies the thriving port of Martira Bay. Other than this small stable area, though, the geography of the Jagged Coast changes constantly. The rock is porous and unstable, so large chunks continuously break off and collapse into the sea. For this reason, few homes or roads are built close to the shore.

According to rumor, the coastline is being deliberately undermined by a race of underwater creatures who are jealous of land dwellers. Other rumors maintain that the entire region is breaking up in a prelude to the Hour of Ascension, when the living inhabitants shall be drowned in the sea to make way for the dead.

The recent wave of negative energy turned the sea gray and restless. Strange whirlpools, some up to a hundred feet in diameter, are wreaking havoc with shipping. No one knows what is causing these whirlpools to appear.

The Mistlands - The northern and eastern fringes of Necropolis have no clear border; instead, they are hemmed in by the Mists. This wall of chilling vapor is constantly shifting, sometimes as much as a mile or two at a time. Pockets of this Mist also drift across the ground in this region. Some think that they hide the entrances to the underground lairs of the dark elves and goblins that plague the area.

One of the oddest features of the Mistlands is its sinkholes of silence, which range from a few hundred feet to a mile in width. All creatures inside one of these sinkholes act as if they were victims of a silence spell (no saving throw permitted). However, these sinkholes are not per- manent. They seemingly appear and vanish at random. The Mistlands contain three major towns: Neblus, the region's capital; Nevuchar Springs; and Sidnar. Elven culture dominates this region.

Since the destruction of Il Aluk, the Eternal Order (the official church of Darken) has weakened in this region considerably, and a few other churches have sprung up. Nevuchar Springs now houses the lawful evil temple for the Church of Ezra.

The Mountains of Misery - This region is dominated by Mount Nyid and Mount Nirka, two volcanic cones that have lain dormant for centuries. Recently, however, a thin plume of sulfurous, yellow smoke has been sighted over each. Combined with a recent increase in earth tremors, many fear that the volcanoes may be about ready to erupt.

The rest of the region is made up of jagged foothills through which a number of rivers and streams flow. Much of this unexplored area is home to goblins, kobolds, dark elves, darklings, and broken ones.

One of the strangest phenomena in the region is reported to occur at Lake Temporus, the source of the Tempe River. All around its shores are animals standing utterly still with their mouths lowered to the water. Oddly enough, they seem to be frozen in time. Also, ghostly forms are often sighted near the two volcanoes. It is rumored that these are the mounts the dead will ride when they return to push the living from the land.

Gold, silver, and gem mining are the primary activities here, and two mining towns have sprung up as a result: the dwarven settlement of Tempe Falls and the gnomish community of Mayvin.

The Vale of Tears - Originally known as the Vuchar Valley, this region used to be a fertile valley and a highway for boats. Since the devastation of II Aluk, river traffic along the Vuchar has come to a sudden halt. Vessels emerge from II Aluk's canals with crews of corpses. Cut off from their markets, the farmers of the Vale of Tears now must watch in sorrow as their crops rot in the fields.

In addition, the Vuchar has been behaving strangely, rising and falling and carrying dark red silt. The more imaginative compare the river to a vein that ebbs and flows with the pulse of the land.

The Vale of Tears includes small patches of forest, orchards that have long since grown wild. Few farmers enter these woods, despite the possible bountiful harvests. According to legend, these wild orchards are inhabited by lycanthropes and gremishka (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III).

The major cities in this region include the human settlements of Karg and Maykle, and the halfling fishing village of Delagia.

It should be noted that although Azalin is believed to have died in the destruction of Il Aluk, the powerful

magical defenses that guarded Darkon's borders are still in place. When an army from Falkovnia attempted to invade two months after the disaster, it was repelled when the dead along the border rose from their graves and came once again to the land's defense. This has given rise to the belief that Necropolis is on the verge of being claimed by the dead in its entirety (as legend states that it will) and that King Azalin has joined the ranks of the dead. In fact, some believe the enigmatic ruler of what was Il Aluk, who is simply called Death, is Azalin risen from the grave.

Cultural Level: Varies from region to region. In the west, the influence of Lamordia and Dementlieu, not to mention the cosmopolitan trade center Martira Bay, results in a chivalric culture. However, the inhabitants in the far eastern portions of the domain exist at a dark-age level.

The Folk: Although any resident of Necropolis who came to this land more than three months ago fervently believes he has always lived here, the population of this domain originated on a variety of vastly different worlds. Thus, its inhabitants include a mixture of different races, styles, and philosophies.

Also, since the recent undead invasions, many inhabitants of Necropolis have tried to flee to other domains. Thus, Lamordia and Nova Vaasa have seen an influx of penniless refugees.

The Law: Those who dominate each of Necropolis's six regions take many forms. However, two things that they all have in common are an evil nature and an unswerving loyalty to the master of II Aluk, a creature known only as Death. Created by a prototype of the doomsday device, Death was present during the activation of Azalin's terrible machine. Resembling nothing so much as the Grim Reaper, this mysterious creature completely controls all beings within the borders of Il Aluk.

The Mistlands are loosely ruled by Trillen Mistwalker, who is more interested in soliciting help to find a mysterious ruined tower in the Mists than actually ruling the populace. In the Boglands, Glennis McFadden, a green hag, has secretly built up an army of minions and collections of evil spells and potions to manipulate the inhabitants. Galf Kloggin, a wererat, runs of a gang of thieves that terrorize the people of the Forest of Shadows. Beryl Silvertress, a dwarf vampire, uses her great beauty to dominate the inhabitants of the Mountains of Misery. Yako Vormoff, a vassalich who died in Azalin's recent ritual, rules undisputedly in the Vale of Tears. Finally, along the Jagged Coast, a ghoul lord by the name of Damon Skragg dominates and feeds on the natives.

Native Player Characters: Natives of Necropolis can be of any character classes available on the Demiplane of Dread. Most priests in Necropolis belong to the Temple of the Eternal Order, but this religion is slowly dissolving. Because of the widely held belief that the dead will rise again to reclaim the land (and the belief that this is presently happening), characters from Necropolis suffer a -2 penalty to all fear and horror checks brought about by undead creatures.

Personalities of Note: Since the recent transformation from Darkon to Necropolis, many strange and terrible characters have risen to prominence here. Trillen Mistwalker is one of the dominant personalities of the Mistlands. This elf ghost actually looks as though he were still alive, fooling most of the inhabitants. Trillen is obsessed with finding a mysterious tower he discovered in the Mists during his life, though he actually does not even remember what it contains. He died after squandering all of his wealth and inadvertently causing the death of his brother in trying to find this tower again.

Qlennis McFadden is thought to be an eccentric old lady with a knack for brewing herbal remedies and offering comforting counsel to troubled folk. Unfortunately, this is not true. This green hag recently forsook her dismal abode in the swamps and moved into the heart of Viaki to exact a slow and deadly revenge upon the community who killed her two sister hags.

Galf Kloggin is a halfling wererat who has trained a number of fellow lycanthropes in the arts of thievery. He heads a gang of bandits who are building a horde of treasure stored deep under Oalf's home in the Forest of Shadows. The residents of Rivalis do not realize that Galf is the head of the gang since his cohorts come and go through a series of tunnels he constructed underneath the town.

Beryl Silvertress is a dwarf vampire obsessed with exacting revenge on the vampire who created her. She is a member of the Kargat, a secret police force that once served Azalin. She firmly believes that her creator's hiding place is common knowledge but that a great conspiracy prohibits her from learning his whereabouts.

Yako Vormoff was a minion of Azalin before the activation of the doomsday device. Currently, Yako controls an army of giant flesh golems and has even created his own maggot golem. Since Azalin's disappearance, Yako rules the Vale of Tears in his place. Most importantly, Yako is still searching for the phylactery that holds his spirit, which is presumably hidden somewhere in Castle Avernus.

Damon Skragg commands a crew of ghasts on his ship, the *Bountiful*. For the most part, he remains anchored at Martira Bay in order to satisfy his crew's hunger for mortal flesh. Damon and his crew never leave the ship during the day and refuse to allow visitors on their vessel. Few beings know of Damon's status as an undead creature.

Encounters: Almost any type of undead creature can be encountered in Necropolis. Also, because of the recent upheaval here, the chance of encounters is relatively high. Characters have a 40% chance every day for an encounter, and a 50% chance twice each night.

Further Reading: Necropolis and the despots ruling its regions are detailed in the *Requiem* campaign expansion, which also includes rules for creating and playing undead characters.

Darklord of Necropolis

Since the mysterious disappearance of Azalin, the identity of the true darklord of Necropolis remains a mystery.

Falkovnia

The Land: Falkovnia lies in the northwestern quarter of the Core, south of Necropolis and east of Dementlieu. Forests blanket large portions of this domain. Falkovnian timber is towering and black, unlike the trees in any other region, and locals call these trees "vigila dimorta", or "sentries of death". In eastern Falkovnia, where the Balinoks thrust toward the heavens, many of the trees have died. The bark and leaves are gone, but the naked cores still stand. bleached almost white, like driftwood. According to legend, one tree dies for every person Vlad Drakov executes. Some even claim that the trees actually ignite, the bark bursting into flames spontaneously.

Large areas of this dead forest have been cleared to make room for wheat fields. Over the last several years, Falkovnia has become the Core's "breadbasket", exporting grain to virtually every other domain. The road between the towns of Silbervas and Aerie is lined by swaying fields of gold in late summer, punctuated by small farmhouses with thatched roofs. The dense wood is extremely difficult to fell, and clearing roads makes young men old before they reach age thirty.

Every sizable settlement in Falkovnia is linked by roads that are wide and well maintained for troop movement. Lekar, the Core's largest city, lies in the western part of Falkovnia. Over fifteen thousand people live within the walls of this heavily fortified settlement, and nearly a quarter of them are soldiers. The city's location and the domain's excellent roads make Lekar a natural center for trade. Merchants fill the streets, handling wares from all the bordering domains. As traders bustle past, beggars glean what they can. They crouch in every doorway, pleading, their arms reaching up to those who walk by. Many beggars, crippled by the soldiers, cannot even stand. Most of Lekar's citizens live in squalor. The twisting alleys in the laborers' quarter are filled with sewage, mud, and dung.

Falkovnia has three other sizable towns, each with some degree of fortification. Stangengrad, home to sixty-five hundred people, perches on the northern border, near Necropolis. Aerie, a village on the southern border, has a population of two thousand. Morfenzi, in the eastern foothills, is home to some fifteen hundred people. Another five thousand Falkovnians live in Silbervas, on the eastern shore of Lake Kriegvogel. The summer palace of the domain's tyrannical lord sits on a hill in the Upper City. When the wind blows off Lake Kriegvogel, the city gets relief from the hot summers of this land. When the wind blows from the north and Lord Drakov is in residence, the screams of the victims he has tortured for his amusement can be heard throughout Silbervas.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: Falkovnians are a downtrodden lot - overtaxed, overworked, and terrorized by Drakov's soldiers. Every child is branded on the forehead with the sign of a hawk, Drakov's mark, to make clear their servitude. The folk despise Drakov, but dare not curse him in public; they do not have the strength to overthrow him. Traveling to another domain is forbidden to all but a few. Foreigners can cross the borders, but not without harassment. The language of Falkovnia is completely alien from all other tongues spoken in the Core, although many Falkovnians also speak Balok or Darkonese.

In the cities and towns, people wear drab clothing. Even perceptive foreigners adhere to this custom, because no one wants to stand out from the crowd. To attract notice is to put one's life in danger. In more remote areas, life is still hard, but Drakov's squads are less oppressive.

Falkovnia is no place for demihumans. Drakov has declared them state property and considers them chattel. He encourages intermarriage, but the natives forbid it. Children with only one human parent are also claimed by the state at birth.

Soldiers represent the highest class of Falkovnian citizens, and only humans can be soldiers. Falkovnia's elite are all military men fiercely loyal to Drakov. Officers pay no taxes, travel without restriction, and can carry weapons. Citizens who arm

themselves have committed a capital offense, for which their entire family must suffer.

Native Player Characters: Falkovnian player characters cannot be warriors. The only warriors are those in the army, and they remain a firm tool of Lord Drakov. Wizards and priests are tolerated only as long as they do not appear to threaten Drakov's authority, or his idea of a perfect kingdom. Rogues are the most common type of adventurers from Falkovnia, and the only ones who may begin play with any proficiencies in weapons other than daggers, clubs, or bows. All other heroes must find someone to teach them weapon skills after play has begun. However, all Falkovnian player characters receive a +1 bonus to all fear and horror checks involving scenes of gruesome brutality and gore, since it is a common element of their daily lives.

Personalities of Note: The domain's lord, Vlad Drakov, colors all aspects of life in Falkovnia with his brutality. However, of late something resembling an armed resistance has begun to form. Rumors tell of a mighty white-haired human warrior named Gondegal, and some claim that through brilliant hit-and-run tactics, a troop of kobolds have more or less driven Drakov's troops from a region at the heart of the domain. This is not the first time someone has had limited success against Drakov, nor will it be the last.

The Law: Vlad Drakov rules Falkovnia, and his brutal militia controls the domain. Not all are men-at-arms, however; bureaucrats also receive military commissions. Falkovnia has no police force, only the army (see "Encounters", below), so trials are conducted by a military tribunal. Prisons are few and virtually empty because punishment is swift and harsh.

Drakov demands at least one execution each night, at the dinner hour. He takes his meal while observing the prisoner's slow death. On special evenings, as many as forty people are impaled on tall, thick stakes for his enjoyment. Occasionally he calls in an orchestra to accompany their screams. If Ravenloft is a prison for the damned, then few deserve to be here more than Drakov.

Encounters: Characters have a 50% chance for an incidental encounter in Falkovnia, day or night. Falkovnia holds very few undead, but the living are horrid enough. The forests are rich with deer and wild boar, as well as predators such as wolves. Near populated areas, half of all encounters are with soldiers. Most of them are 3rd-level fighters equipped with scale mail, spears, and shields. Elite fighting men are 5th-level fighters with banded mail and swords or polearms.

Further Reading: Much of the *Grim Harvest* adventure series takes place in Falkovnia, primarily in and around Lekar and Stangengrad.

Darklord of Falkovnia

Vlad Drakov
15th-Level Human Fighter,
Neutral Evil



Armor Class	By armor	Str	16
Movement	12	Dex	12
Level/Hit Dice	15	Con	15
Hit Points	86	Int	15
THAC0	7 (4 w/rod)	Wis	11
No. of Attacks	2 (4 w/rod)	Cha	16
Damage/Attack	1d4+4, 1d6+4, or by weapon		
Special Attacks	Nil		
Special Defences	Magical Items		
Magic Resistance	50%		

This large, dark man is eighty-five years old, though he appears to be no more than fifty. He stands six foot three inches tall with a wide, heavy frame. His skin is a weather-beaten brown, creased by age and rough living, and his features are coarse, with brooding blue-gray eyes and a large, hawkish nose. He wears a full, uneven beard streaked with gray, and his light brown hair is limp and unkempt. When he opens his mouth, he shows his perfect, white teeth.

Vlad always wears some sort of battle dress. He usually dons chain mail with forearm and shin plates, topped with a black cape. The cape, which is trimmed in white fur, is loosely gathered by a thick leather belt with a massive silver buckle fashioned into a screaming hawk's head, Vlad's personal symbol. A pair of gauntlets and a sheath (for his rod of flailing) hang from his belt.

Background: Drakov hails from the kingdom Thenol, which lies on the continent of Taladas on the planet Krynn. In Thenol, Drakov headed a mercenary band known as the "Talon of the Hawk". (His nickname was "the Hawk" and his men were called "talons".) Vlad was noted for his ruthless and brutal tactics. He worked for whoever paid him the most money, usually the evil fanatics of Hith.

One evening long ago, Drakov's troupe was leaving the Conquered Lands after a session of looting and pillaging. A fog swelled from the ground as they rode, and the Mists carried Drakov and his men into Ravenloft, depositing them on the edge of Darken, the domain of Azalin the lich. Drakov believed he had discovered a new land and set out to conquer a slice of it. He was naive about the Demiplane's powers, however, and he underestimated the lich lord. Drakov began a campaign of terror. His talons sacked a small village, and he ordered a mass execution of those who resisted. As was his custom, he had them impaled on thick pikes, which were then planted in the ground to create a grisly garden of agony. Vlad ate his meals while he watched them die.

Then the familiar spectacle changed. When the last victim ceased to writhe and moan, the bodies turned into zombies. Pulling themselves off the pikes, the creatures attacked Drakov's men. Additional creatures, all dead, began to swarm onto the scene from all sides. In desperation, the talons fled into the Mists.

A new domain opened up for Drakov, and he became its lord. He and his men settled in the new land and named it Falkovnia ("Realm of the Hawk"). Refugees from Darkon and other territories spilled across the border, hoping for a better existence. Drakov's men enslaved many of them, but allowed others to settle freely.

Before Ravenloft took him in, Drakov was just a henchman, hired by rulers who looked down upon "his kind". Their insults burned him, for he, too, aspired to rule. The dark powers gave him what he sought - a position of ultimate leadership - but not what he truly desired. the respect of other rulers and the strength to instill fear and awe in them. His former masters were no longer present to appreciate his position, and Azalin of Darken was so powerful that he looked down on Drakov just as Drakov's former employers had. The other nearby rulers were women and fops, not the powerful men of war Drakov wanted to be acknowledged by.

Vlad has tried to invade Darkon at least five times since he became the lord of his own domain, and every attempt has failed. Each talon who perished on Darkonite soil immediately became an undead soldier and rose to fight against its former comrades. Drakov has also tried to conquer other domains bordering Falkovnia, but he has failed each time. The strength of the lords in their own domains make such conquests unrealistic.

Current Sketch: With no lands to conquer and no leaders to impress, Drakov has developed other forms of amusement. His favorite pastime remains the observation of a slow death. No matter who or what the victim is, he never tires of the sight. He usually takes his evening meal on the terrace of his keep, overlooking the grounds of his estate. While he dines, at least one victim is impaled on a ten-foot stake. As gravity draws the victim down the pike, the body's descent becomes a sort of meter for the progression of the meal. When Drakov invites guests to witness the spectacle, an orchestra plays in the background.

Drakov's other primary joy is hawking. He practices this sport regularly. The hawks are trained to attack on his command, but he rarely directs their attacks against people. He cherishes the hawks and prefers not to subject them to potentially deadly counterattacks. Vlad has little regard for human life, but he loves his birds.

Closing the Borders: Drakov cannot magically seal his borders. Instead, he orders his troops to patrol them. Word of closure spreads quickly among the folk, along with a warning to travelers. Those caught trying to escape are killed on sight.

Combat: Years of battle have eroded Vlad's strength and endurance. Nonetheless, he is still a match for many younger fighting men. The land gives him energy beyond that of a normal person his age.

Vlad is proficient in the use of almost all battlefield weapons. In particular, he is skilled in the axe, bow, mace, Hail, many polearms, and the sword. When striding into combat he prefers to carry a short sword and hand axe on his belt. He is also an excellent horseman. He chooses his armor to match the situation. While fighting on horseback he prefers plate mail, and while on foot he favors chain mail. In both cases he carries a shield.

Vlad is extremely canny in battle, making superb use of the terrain against his opponent. He stoops to any dirty trick and never abides by any rules of combat. On his left hand Vlad wears a *ring of free action*. He also carries a *rod of flailing* in his right hand, or wears it in a sheath on his belt. The gauntlets dangling from his belt are *gauntlets of ogre power*. He is not known to possess any other magical items.

Vlad finds all magic distasteful, even though he uses magical items himself. He despises spells and spellcasters, and the dark powers have granted him a magic resistance of 50%. Even healing and other beneficial spells are subject to this resistance.

Keening

The Land: The small Core domain of Keening surrounds a single, lonely mountain, which rises steeply just east of the Shadow Rift and north of Tepest. Keening seems to have no living inhabitants. At the base of Mount Lament lies a decaying town that once might have housed ten thousand people, but the living no longer dwell here - only zombies.

Cultural Level: Presently, Keening has no cultural level, but the town at the base of Mount Lament was built by a chivalric society.

The Folk: Keening is inhabited by zombies whose emotionless daily routine mocks the habits of their former lives. They attack any living being who dares to interfere with their existence.

The Law: A banshee called Tristessa lives upon the mountain, and she is the ruling power in Keening. When Tristessa wails, travelers can hear her chilling moans the moment they cross the border.

Native Player Characters: There are no native player characters from Keening.

Encounters: Characters traveling through Keening have a 35% chance once per day and twice per night of encountering 1d4 zombies.

Further Reading: Details on Keening and Tristessa were originally featured in the game accessory *Darklords*.

Darklord of Keening

Tristessa
Banshee, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	0	Str	-
Movement	15	Dex	13
Level/Hit Dice	8	Con	-
Hit Points	64	Int	15
THAC0	13	Wis	13
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	9
Damage/Attack	2d10+8 (death touch)		
Special Attacks	Death wail 3 times per (paralyzing during sunlight), crippling touch, spell-like powers		
Special Defences	Need +1 or better weapon to hit, detect living creature		
Magic Resistance	50%		

Background: Mistakenly thought to be a drow, Tristessa was a powerful shadow elf priestess of Lolth in the now abandoned underground kingdom of Arak. Tristessa was banished to the surface with her newborn baby for unknown crimes against her people. Exposure to the sun killed them both, but Tritessa's spirit was absorbed into the Mists, and the dark powers granted her the small land of Keening.

Current Sketch: Tristessa constantly searches for her lost child. She has gone mad with grief over the loss of her baby, often destroying those she encounters with her pitiful wail.

Closing the Borders: To close the borders of Keening, Tristessa creates a wall of wind. No creature can Hy or walk through this wall or diminish it in any way.

Combat: The banshee can sense the presence of any living creature in her domain, and she will seek them out to beseech their aid in locating her lost baby. She usually attacks only those foolish enough to begin an ascent of her mountain, or those who attack her first.

Any who encounter the banshee must make successful saving throws vs. paralyzation with a -2 penalty or flee in terror. Any creature who hears Tristessa's wail must make a successful saving throw vs. death magic or die, becoming her minion. At will, she also can choose to cripple with her touch. Any body part she touches warps and twists, causing 1d8 points of damage. However, the deformity slowly fades away if the victim leaves Keening.

When the dark powers granted Tristessa the domain of Keening, she was given the following drowlike abilities three times per day: *dancing lights*, *faerie fire* (area of effect increased by seventy square feet), and *darkness* (at will). The banshee can move these effects around at will, and their ranges are one hundred eleven feet beyond the norm. (These abilities have only further confused reports of her true racial identity.) She has the following priestess abilities three times per day: *clairvoyance*, *detect lie*, *suggestion*, and *dispel magic*. She can also use the following spells at will: *levitate*, *know alignment*, and *detect magic*.

Holy water inflicts 2d4 points of damage to Tristessa, but *dispel evil* merely forces her to return to her lair for 1d4 hours. She is turned as a special undead, though priests and paladins suffer a -4 penalty in these attempts.

Tepest

The Land: Tepest is nestled in the Balinok Mountains directly south of Keening and Necropolis. East Timori Road (which used to cross the mountains of Ravenloft, but now dead-ends at the Shadow Rift) bisects Tepest from east to west. Near the center of the domain, the road hugs the southern shore of Lake Kronov. The lake's clear waters never freeze completely, though snow and ice cling to the surrounding peaks more than half the year.

Tepest has two villages, Viktal and Kellee, each home to about three thousand people. Viktal lies on the south-eastern shore of Lake Kronov, while Kellee is about twenty-five miles east on the Timori Road. These are a poor folk, who live in small whitewashed cottages with thatched roofs. As a matter of pride, they carefully adorn the cottage walls with intricate floral patterns, and in the summer the window boxes overflow with blossoms.

Viktalians fish for sturgeon on the lake or herd goats and sheep. The lead goat in every herd wears a bell, and as the herders guide their animals home at dusk, haunting clangs echo across the valley. The wood in this domain burns poorly, causing lots of smoke; hence, dried animal dung often fuels Viktalian fires.

In addition to the human settlements, Tepest is home to an indeterminable number of goblin tribes. The humanoids lair in caves in the mountains and hills of the domain, preying on travelers and shepherds. The goblins, in turn, are preyed upon by horrid hags who also make their homes here.

Cultural Level: Early medieval.

The Folk: Tepestani are fair of skin, with freckles. Their hair colors range from auburn to orangish shades. They speak a tongue entirely dissimilar to that of any other Core domain. Their clothing is simple, consisting of cotton blouses and skirts for the women, and loose-fitting shirts and trousers for the men. Both sexes wear boots and heavy furs in winter, though adults and children alike tend to go barefoot as soon as the weather turns warm.

Tepestani are an extremely superstitious lot. They believe the night is haunted by "little beasties" who kidnap small children. There was a time when the Tepestani humans shut their doors tight against these creatures, huddling around their hearths in fear. However, that began to change a decade ago.

In 740 on the Barovian calendar, the stars shifted in the heavens, and two nations to the west and south of Tepest simply ceased to exist. Where G'Henna and Markovia had once been was now just an immense canyon filled with dark, swirling Mists, known only as the Shadow Rift.

The Tepestani could think of only one explanation for what had happened: magic. The hags and "little beasties" of the night must have wrought evil spells that had destroyed entire nations. Fearful that the same might happen to them, the Tepestani declared war on the creatures of the night - and all who consorted with them.

Native Player Characters: Tepest has no mages, so this class is not available to native player characters. Further, the literacy level in Tepest is so low that heroes must devote an additional slot to purchase the reading/writing nonweapon proficiency. However, Tepestani are remarkably well-informed about the monstrous denizens of the land. Whenever a Tepestani is confronted with a certain kind of creature (or even hears reports of one), he has a 60% chance of being familiar with the creature and knowing at least one of its vulnerabilities. (This check is rolled by the Dungeon Master, in secret. If the check fails, the Dungeon Master may feed the hero false information, since the knowledge comes from folk tales.) All Tepestani priests belong to the cleric class described in Appendix Three: Character Classes.

Personalities of Note: Wyan, an elderly priest in Viktal, spearheads the crusade against the "little beasties". This crusade has managed to destroy some of the land's more foolish hags, but several innocent bystanders have also been targeted. More than one unfortunate elf traveler was declared a "night-creature" and slain. Almost a dozen innocents have been destroyed this way over the last ten years. Wyan and his crusaders are well-meaning, but they are becoming increasingly overzealous.

The Law: Wyan and his crusaders have become something of a militia in Tepest. They are an even mix of 1st-level fighters and 1st-level clerics.

Encounters: Those who travel southwest of Lake Kronov will enter the dire forest of Blackroot, an evil treant with particularly terrible powers.

Goblins are very common in this domain. Fortunately, the voracious appetite of the hags keeps their numbers in check. Unfortunately, the hags also hunger for human and demihuman flesh. Travelers in Tepest have a 50% chance of an encounter once each day and twice each night. If characters venture into remote areas, the number of rolls doubles.

Darklords of Tepest

Tepest is a unique domain in Ravenloft as it has three lords, although they are all hags.

Laveeda
Annis, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	0	Str	19
Movement	18	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	7+7	Con	17
Hit Points	78	Int	14
THAC0	13	Wis	15
No. of Attacks	3	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d8+8/ 1d8+8/ 2d4+1		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	20%		



Leticia
Sea Hag, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	2	Str	19
Movement	18, Sw 15	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	5	Con	17
Hit Points	39	Int	12
THAC0	15	Wis	13
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d4+6/ 2d4+2		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	50%		

Lorinda
Greenhag, Neutral Evil

Armor Class	-2	Str	18/51

Movement	18, Sw 12	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	9	Con	16
Hit Points	81	Int	14
THAC0	11	Wis	18
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	3
Damage/Attack	1d2+6/ 1d2+6		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	35%		

Like all hags, the three sisters can change shape at will, assuming any appearance they like. However, no shape really pleases them, for they always see themselves and each other as they truly are: hideous, wretched, scrawny creatures, with wrinkles, baggy skin, pointed noses, sharp black teeth, and warts. In addition, each shares common characteristics with other hags of her type (see the Monstrous Manual tome).

Background: As babies, the three hags were left upon the porch of Rudella Mindefisk by fairies in response to her ardent wish for daughters. Although her husband Holger, a farmer, had no use for "weakling daughters", she insisted on rearing them. The girls were weak and sickly at first (as their reluctant adoptive father feared) but strengthened as time went on. Meanwhile, Rudella sickened and eventually died, somehow drained of her vitality.

After his wife's death, Holger unsuccessfully set about trying to rid himself of the girls. Eventually, he accepted the fact that they could not be dismissed and grouchily demanded that they keep his house tidy and cook for him and his sons.

Often left to themselves, the girls spent much time plotting how they would leave the farm behind. They needed gold to make it on their own, but they did not know where to get it. Then, a wealthy man sought shelter at the farm one stormy night, and they murdered him for his money. Rather than bury the body, they cooked it into stew and served it to their unsuspecting father and brothers. That plan worked so well that they continued the practice for several years.

Eventually they realized that they could not make enough money this way, so they decided to entice some traveler to take them away. Before long, a roguish dandy came along, but he had no intention of taking any of them away with him. Instead, he masterfully played them against each other until their jealousy for one another peaked. Ultimately, they murdered him so that none would lose him, but as they did so, the Mists claimed them, depositing them in the new domain of Tepest.

Current Sketch: The hags have not been in Ravenloft long, and they are not well known by either natives or travelers. The goblins that plague their domain are a more immediate and visible threat, so those carnivorous humanoids are always blamed for the disappearance of natives and travelers. In fact, the hags are responsible for many of those deaths, for they have become gourmet cannibals. They use trickery to ensnare their victims and then take them back to their innocent-looking whitewashed cottage in the woods for dinner.

Closing the Borders: When the hags want their borders sealed, a violent storm encircles the domain. Stinging rain, snow, and bolts of lightning drive travelers inland, toward the lake. Magic does not affect the bizarre storm.

Combat: The sisters have ravenous appetites, but they feed for pleasure more than for survival. Each hag can devour an entire man-sized creature in ten minutes. Their steely claws and incredible strength help them finish the job quickly.

Each hag can mimic the voice of any creature, though after two rounds, there is a 35% chance that she will cackle strangely. Each sister also has the natural ability to change shape and size at will (as the wizard spell shape change). If and when one of them reveals her true appearance to an unsuspecting victim, he may be called upon to make both a fear check and a horror check.

Casting together, the sisters can invoke the following magic: *animate dead*, *control weather*, *curse*, *dream*, *forcecage*, *mindblank*, *polymorph other*, *veil*, and *vision*. They can use these spells twice per day, casting as if they were 9th-level mages. Because they are telepathically linked, they need not be near each other as they cast. The connection is natural and instantaneous, although engaging one of them in battle or any other preoccupying activity prevents them from casting their group spells.

Singularly, each sister can cast the following spells at will, once per round: *audible glamer*, *fog cloud*, *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *speak with monsters*, and *weakness*.

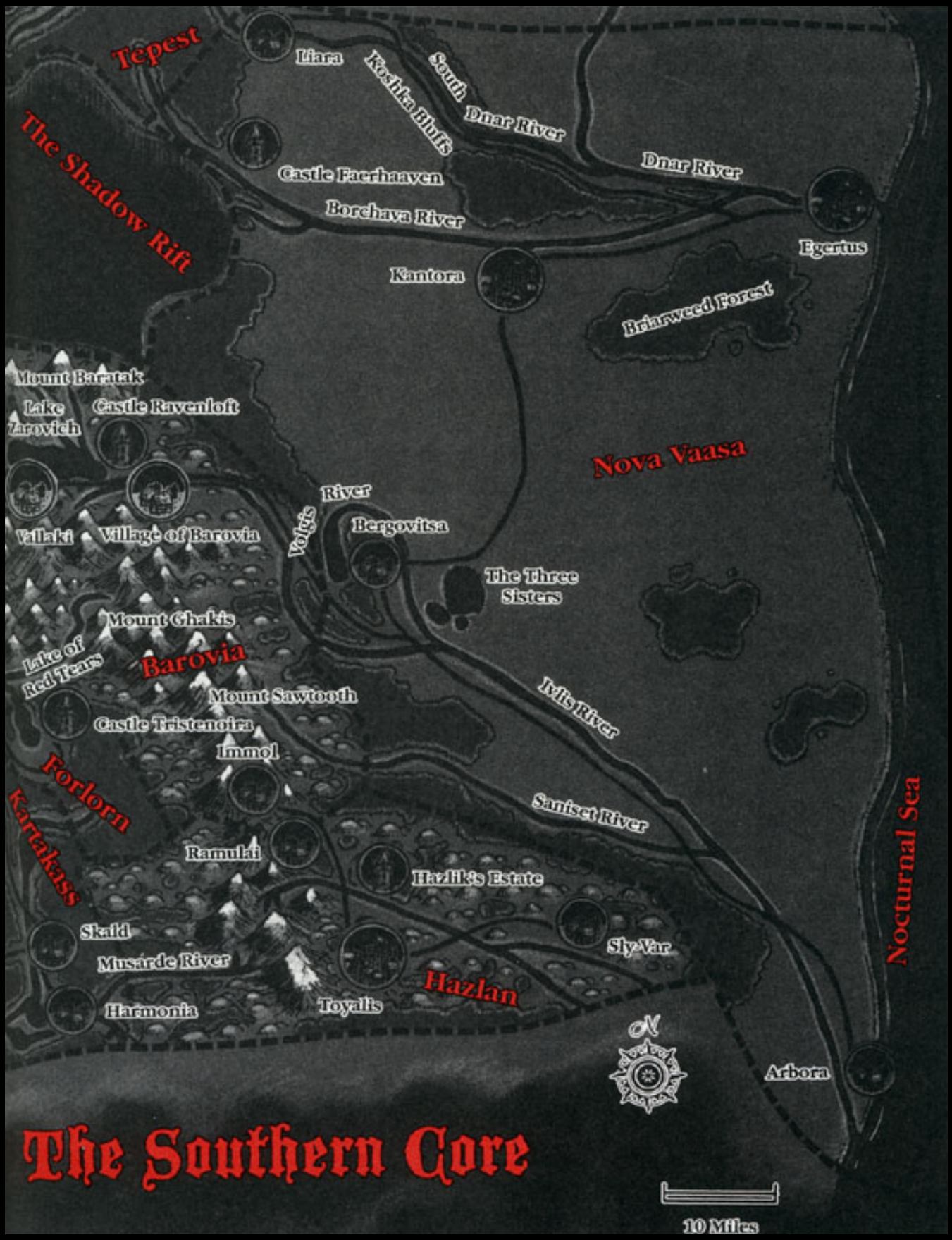
Each hag has her own abilities as well. Laveeda, the annis, can smell human flesh a half-mile away - up to a mile away if the wind blows the scent to her. If she has seen the person before, she can identify who it is by smell. Also, her hearing is so acute that she cannot be surprised. In combat, if she makes three successful attacks in a single round, she has grappled her opponent; all subsequent attacks automatically hit as she heartily rakes and chews her victim alive.

Leticia, the sea hag, can cast a deadly glance, up to three times per day, on any creature within thirty feet. If the victim fails a saving throw vs. poison, there is a 25% chance that he dies of sheer horror and a 75% chance that he becomes paralyzed for three days.

Lorinda, the greenhag, can move through the forest in absolute silence. She also imposes a -5 penalty upon opponents' surprise rolls in that environment.

Mirrors and sunlight are the sisters' least favorite things. Any mirror will crack if one of them looks into it (much to their embarrassment and rage), and sunlight is painful, preventing their ability to shapechange (although it inflicts only one point of damage per turn).

Southeastern core



Southwestern core



This section contains information on Mordent, Valachan, Richemulot, Verbrek, Sithicus, Invidia, Borca, Barovia, Kartakass, Forlorn, Hazlan, and Nova Vaasa.

Mordent

The Land: Mordent's western shore borders the Sea of Sorrows. Sheer cliffs overlook the turbulent sea, though few exceed one hundred fifty feet in height. The beaches are rocky, and in most places, the waves break over boulders, erupting into spray. Beyond the cliffs, the land stretches into great expanses of forest or rolls gently, becoming moors, and a few small pockets of land lie below sea level.

The Arden River flows north through Mordent to Mordentshire, the domain's only major settlement. There, the river turns abruptly and empties into the Arden Bay. The town, located high on a chalky cliff, overlooks the quiet harbor. Mordentshire boasts a population of about two thousand people. It also houses the lawful good temple of the Church of Ezra (see Chapter Five).

Two noteworthy estates are located near Mordentshire: the House on Gryphon Hill and Heather House. Locals know the House on Gryphon Hill as the haunting grounds of Lord Godefroy. It is an evil place filled with terrible creatures. Heather House is the Weathermay family estate. This family owns most of the land directly southwest of town.

Cultural Level: Renaissance.

The Folk: Mordent's natives are of every size and color, but all are human. The language spoken here is identical to that of neighboring Dementlieu, except that residents of Mordent have a slight drawl.

Laborers in Mordentshire are mostly fishermen, taut and lean from their work. The sea is their livelihood, and they reserve respect for those who also make their living from the sea. Peasants who reside away from the village tend to be herders.

Nearly everyone in Mordentshire knows the House on Gryphon Hill is haunted by the restless spirit of Godefroy Mordent. These highly superstitious people believe strongly in ghosts and other creatures from "the other side" (with good reason). However, they do not think such creatures can invade their homes. As the local saying goes, "Don't visit evil, and it won't visit you".

Most folk are well mannered and friendly toward strangers, yet they remain polite, reserved, and often secretive. Mordentish folk have mastered the art of verbal evasion. They will chat for hours about meaningless trivia, but they will rarely answer a personal question. When a storyteller is pressed into action, he will usually share an old tale about an alchemist in Mordentshire who invented an Apparatus that some say could take the soul from any being and cast it into oblivion, or even implant it in another body. (Mordentish parents often scare their children with this version or teasingly say, "You cannot be my child. The Apparatus must have sent you".) Others claim the Apparatus can separate the good and evil in a person, creating two individuals. The Apparatus was supposedly destroyed, but no one knows for sure. Most natives believe the entire tale is fiction.

Native Player Characters: Heroes from Mordent may be of any character class allowed to natives of the Demiplane. Due to the fact that they have been exposed to tales of ghosts and other noncorporeal creatures since childhood, they receive a +2 bonus to all fear and horror checks involving such creatures.

Personalities of Note: Gennifer and Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove are the twin daughters of Daniel Foxgrove. Their mother,

Alice Weathermay, died giving birth to them. At nineteen, the two young women have exceptional analytical and fighting skills that Mordent's more proper folk feel are unladylike. Following in the footsteps of their life-long idols, their uncle George Weathermay and the famous scholar of the macabre Dr. Rudolph van Richten, they have embarked on a career of investigating and defeating evil supernatural creatures and phenomena.

At one time, Dr. Rudolph van Richten was Mordentshire's most famous resident. In his apartment above his small herbalism shop in Mordent, Dr. van Richten penned such works as *Guide to Vampires*, *Guide to Fiends*, and *Guide to Ghosts*, all drawn from personal experience with the dark creatures that haunt the lands of the Core and beyond. Van Richten, however, disappeared recently, so the herbalism shop is being managed by Gennifer and Laurie on behalf of the doctor until he resurfaces or an heir comes forth.

The Law: The mayor of Mordentshire, presently Daniel Foxgrove, is politically the most powerful person in Mordentshire. However, whenever laws are passed or civic decisions are made, the mayor always first considers the possible reactions of the restless spirit of Lord Godefroy. The mayor is supported by a police force of 1st-level fighters who typically wear leather armor and carry footman's maces.

Encounters: No incidental encounters with monsters occur in or around Mordentshire. This does not include the forests near the town, where creatures of the night are as plentiful as the wildlife, just the town itself and the nearby farmlands. Encounters in town may include Vistani, strange folk, or ordinary animals, however. In contrast, the Gryphon Hill area teems with horrid creatures, especially undead (excluding vampires and liches). Lycanthropes, particularly werewolves and werefoxes, may be encountered in the southern portion of the domain. Away from Gryphon Hill, characters have a 25% chance of encountering one of these beasts by day; after nightfall the chance doubles. On or near the infamous hill characters have a 20% chance for an encounter, twice each day. At night on Gryphon Hill, this roll should be made every hour.

Further Reading: Mordentshire was first featured in the classic 1st edition AD&D adventure *Ravenloft II: The House on Gryphon Hill. Howls in the Night* is a more recent visit to the domain.

Darklord of Mordent

Lord Wilfred Godefroy
Ghost, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	0	Str	-
Movement	9	Dex	-
Level/Hit Dice	10	Con	-
Hit Points	40	Int	14
THAC0	11	Wis	11
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	15
Damage/Attack	Nil		
Special Attacks	Ages victim 1d4x10 years		
Special Defences	Immune to spells that affect the mind and biological functions		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Lord Godefroy is a ghost. As such, he appears most often as a transparent figure. He wears a high-necked, ruffled shirt and a close-fitting black coat with tails. His gray hair is pulled back tightly and worked into a complex knot on the back of his head. He appears as an old, stooped man in his seventies, his face deeply lined, brows knit together, and eyes squinting harshly. He sometimes wears pincenez fastened by a chain. His expression is always severe and unforgiving.

Background: Lord Wilfred Qodefroy inherited the Gryphon Hill estate in Mordent. He married Estelle Weathermay and they had a single child, a girl. Godefroy was disappointed, and he was an evil man with a vile temper. During a fit of rage he killed his wife, and when the little girl attempted to intervene, he killed her as well. Then he made it look like an accident in the stable, shooting his best stallion to prove the point.

For the next year, Godefroy was haunted by the spirits of his wife and daughter, until he finally committed suicide. By his own last request, he was buried in the mausoleum of Heather House, the largest estate in Mordent, although his wife and child are buried in the Gryphon Hill cemetery. He did not want their spirits haunting him in death as they had in life.

Though Godefroy did not yet realize it, his activities had captured the attention of the dark powers, even though Mordent was not yet a domain. Then Strahd von Zarovich came to Mordentshire in an ill-fated attempt at escaping his prison in Barovia. Rather than entering the prime material, though, all he managed to do was to draw Mordentshire and the surrounding lands into Ravenloft. Thus, the domain of Mordent was formed. When Strahd returned to Barovia, Lord Godefroy was the most powerful evil force in the area, so he became its lord, thereby increasing his powers.

Current Sketch: Godefroy is an arrogant, conceited snob. He has a hair-trigger temper and a creative bent toward evil. As a ghost, he can roam freely around the entire domain, but he usually restricts himself to Mordentshire and its surroundings, including Gryphon Hill and the Weathermay estate.

This vicious spirit fears only his wife and daughter. Each night, Lady Godefroy and her child hunt down Lord Godefroy and tear at his incorporeal flesh, cursing him for their murders. Lord Godefroy always does what he can to hide from them, which is very little. He vents his fear and frustration on those foolish enough to visit Gryphon Hill, which is uninhabited.

Closing the Borders: When Godefroy wishes to seal his domain, the Mists roll in from the sea and blanket the land. Characters who wander out-of-doors in these conditions find that every road, path, and game trail leads back toward Mordentshire.

Combat: Godefroy is a normal ghost, with the following changes: Any priestly attempt to turn him has no effect. Furthermore, any undead creature within one hundred yards of Godefroy gains a +2 bonus against turning attempts (the "sinkhole of evil" effect is described in Appendix Three: Character Classes).

Valachan

The Land: Valachan is a rugged, forested domain in the southwestern corner of the Core. Its ridges and numerous small canyons make overland travel difficult. Common wildlife include deer, moose, boars, martens, bears, panthers, eagles, and ravens.

Valachan boasts three towns of notable size: Ungrad, population fifteen hundred; Rotwald, four thousand; and Helbenik, thirty-five hundred. Baron von Kharkov's fortress, Castle Pantara, lies between Rotwald and Helbenik, couched on a cliff above the main road.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: Valachani natives are tall and black-skinned. Their hair is straight and black, and both men and women wear it long. They tend to be lean and finely muscled, even those who work at physically hard jobs such as stonecutting. The Valachani dress simply, in baggy trousers, tunics, or smocks. Jewelry is rare, though an occasional earring, bracelet, or ring can be seen. The Valachani language bears similarities to that spoken in Hazlan.

Natives of Valachan also frequently suffer from White Fever, a mild flu that develops at night and leaves its victims listless and bedridden for several days - or so they believe. In truth, the feedings of the darklord and his nosferatu slaves cause this common complaint. Significantly, the Baron rarely kills his victims. Though his appetite is vast, he prefers to bleed several victims conservatively each night rather than drain one or two to death. He imposes the same restraint on his vampiric slaves.

Native Player Characters: Valachani player characters can belong to any class allowed in Ravenloft. Rangers are very common in this wild land.

Personalities of Note: Baron von Kharkov's chief enforcer of law and order is a mysterious elf woman who always wears a veil. Despite being the leader of the baron's tax collectors, she has been known to relieve an entire village of tax burden if a young man of her choosing will join her in the woods. The man is always of exceptional good looks, but he always returns home that evening with hideous scars across his face and body. He never recalls what was done to him.

The Law: Baron Urik von Kharkov rules this domain with an iron fist. He is rumored either to be a vampire or a rare form of lycanthrope known as a werepanther.

The folk recognize the Baron as their lord and ruler. He does not tax them harshly but often summons them to work in his keep at night. The work is harsh, and the laborers usually return home with a case of White Fever.

Once per year, the Baron demands that a young woman leave her family and become his bride. She rarely lives out the year. The people assume that she either kills herself or dies from his abuse. The truth is far worse.

Encounters: The forests of Valachan are rich with wildlife - deer, boar, and moose being the most common. Large predators include bears and, surprisingly, panthers. The vampiric spawn of the Baron haunt the woods at night. The chance for an encounter is 25%, twice during the day and four times at night.

Further Reading: Baron Urik von Kharkov, the darklord of Valachan, is further detailed in *Darklords*.

Darklord of Valachan

Baron Urik von Kharkov
Nosferatu Vampire, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	1	Str	18/00
Movement	12	Dex	18
Level/Hit Dice	10+2	Con	19
Hit Points	50	Int	17
THAC0	11 (8 w/weapon)	Wis	10
No. of Attacks	2 or 1	Cha	17
Damage/Attack	1d3+6/ 1d3+6 or by weapon		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	+2 weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	10%		



Baron Urik von Kharkov is a black-skinned man standing just over six feet tall. He is broad shouldered and quite muscular. His eyes are an unusual shade of yellow, and when he grows angry, they change from round pupils to the slitted ones of a cat. His hair is straight and black, usually kept meticulously groomed.

Background: Von Kharkov began life as a panther, but he was polymorphed into a full-grown human by a Red Wizard of Thay. He was promptly named and titled by the wizard, then schooled and trained for combat. Because of his feline heritage, he displayed a strong tendency toward violence and treachery.

Eventually the Red Wizard brought Von Kharkov together with a female enemy and allowed them to become lovers. He then dispelled his polymorphing magic, allowing the panther to tear the woman to shreds. Having forgotten his true roots, Von Kharkov was horrified by the transformation. He suspected that the wizard meant to use him for subsequent assassinations, so the man-panther fled Thay and stumbled into a bank of Mists, which transported him to Darkon. There, he learned of Azalin's secret undead police, the Kargat, so he sought out a vampire to induct him into the ranks. When his master was killed twenty years later, he fled into the Mists once more. This time, the dark powers embraced him and created the domain of Valachan.

Von Kharkov quickly adjusted to his new prison. He learned that it was stocked with black leopards and domestic cats to do his bidding. Also, his hands grew fur and retractable claws (which he hides with gloves).

Years later he found a small statuette of a cat in the lower reaches of his keep, which proved to be the Cat ofFelkouic. The magical item eventually hunted him, but such was his confidence in his lordly might that he did not fear it, so the cat mauled him badly. To this day, that magical item is the only thing he truly fears.

Current Sketch: Von Kharkov has been a panther, a man, and a vampire, so he retains some abilities of all three: He has the quick and ferocious temper of a great cat, the intelligence and creativity of a human, and the fell powers of a nosferatu vampire (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III). He hates vampires not created by him and wizards above all other things.

Closing the Borders: When Baron von Kharkov wants to seal his domain, the forests become pathless. Characters who enter the woods become disoriented as they fight their way through ever-thickening underbrush. After an exhausting effort, the would-be escapees find themselves still in Valachan. Those who try to fly over the trees are mercilessly attacked and driven back by hordes of bats.

Combat: Like all nosferatu vampires, Von Kharkov drains blood rather than life force (experience levels). For game purposes, this is a loss of Constitution points. The Baron can draw one to three points per round, and he heals one point of damage to himself for every point of Constitution he drains. If a victim's score reaches 2, then he is at death's door, and only an immediate blood transfusion will save his life. Otherwise, the victim's score continues to drop by one point per day, whether or not Von Kharkov attacks. When the Constitution score drops to 0, the victim dies. If the victim is not reduced to a score of 2 or less, he recovers one point per day until the original score is regained.

Anyone who has been bitten by the Baron can be telepathically contacted by him anywhere in Valachan, and unless the victim makes a successful saving throw vs. spell, he is subject to the effects of a *charm* spell. Of course, those who die of the Baron's attacks rise as his minions.

The Baron can charm mortals (as the spell) with his gaze, but the intended victim is allowed a saving throw vs. spell with a -3 penalty. A second form of his gaze attack works like a *forget* spell, causing the victim to lose all memory of the previous three rounds. He uses both of these gaze attacks while draining his victim, so his assaults are rarely remembered.

The Baron can extend his claws through his gloves and use them to attack for 1d3 points of damage per hit. He also can take the form of a panther at will (but not a wolf or bat), gaining all abilities of a natural creature of that form. His statistics in panther form are presented below.

> Von Kharkov's panther form: AC 6; MV 18; HD 10+2; THACO 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6; SA rake with rear claws (1d6/1d6) when both fore claws hit; 3D surprised only on a 1; SZ M; Int genius (17).

Richemulot

The Land: Richemulot is a land of forested wilderness. Here and there, travelers will find isolated farms, woodsman's cottages, monasteries, or even a wizard's compound, but the majority of this domain's sparse population is centered in and around its three large towns: Pont-a-Museau, Ste. Ronges, and Mortigny. At least a third of the buildings in each settlement lie empty or in ruins. Sixteen thousand people live in Pont-a-Museau, but the city could house nearly twenty thousand comfortably. Much of the city is boarded up and infested with all manner of vermin. Similarly, about sixty-five hundred folk inhabit the once-grand city of Ste. Ronges, leaving homes for another twelve thousand citizens vacant. Mortigny houses eight thousand people, but if the buildings are any indication, another five thousand folk once lived there. No one knows where the inhabitants of these cities vanished to, but they were already long gone when Richemulot was first noticed southwest of Falkovnia. Not even the natives of these cities know where those other residents have disappeared to. As far as anyone can remember, the cities of Richemulot have always been partially abandoned. Rumors abound that items of arcane power and great caches of gems and gold still lay undiscovered in the crumbling structures.

Richemulot's settlements are known for their finely constructed sewer systems. Wererats live in these labyrinthine tunnels.

Cultural Level: Chivalric.

The Folk: The people of Richemulot are generally fair of hair and skin, with blue being the most common eye color. Black hair is generally found only among the land's more powerful families, particularly the Reniers - the domain's ruling family - and their cousins.

Every family in the cities of Richemulot inhabits a large home or series of buildings - as much as they can fill comfortably. Most edifices have fallen into ruin or disrepair. The people of Richemulot are not possessive about the things they own - almost everything they have was abandoned by someone before them. Also, every person in this domain appears affluent, and the poverty and starvation found in neighboring lands is not typically found in Richemulot.

Material possessions do not equate to status in Richemulot. Instead, information means power in this land. For this reason, fashion and jewelry are less important in Richemulot than in other lands (although there are still sharp differences between the loose shirts and trousers both men and women wear normally, and the extravagant silk waistcoats of the men and voluminous, bare-shouldered dresses of the women when it comes to formal occasions and balls).

The population of Richemulot is slowly growing. Many folk flee their homelands in Falkovnia, Invidia, or Dementlieu in hopes of making a better life in Richemulot. Some succeed, but others vanish without trace. Many of those who vanish do so after attempting to challenge the Reniers or one of Richemulot's other powerful families.

Many tongues are spoken in Richemulot, but the two most common are Falkovnian and a dialect of the language spoken in Dementlieu. The difference between the languages is most obvious on the written level, as the written language of Richemulot tends to be more phonetically oriented than that of Dementlieu. (Educated men in Dementlieu tend to view natives of Richemulot as borderline illiterates, while the folks of Richemulot view themselves as practical.)

Native Player Characters: Every class allowed in Ravenloft may be found in Richemulot. Wizards and priests tend to be highly respected, due to their ability to wrest magical secrets from inanimate objects and even the air itself. All Richemulot natives may take the local history nonweapon proficiency for free. However, they do not have much information about their cities and who built them, instead possessing information on what families are currently allied with whom and which factions might be planning to move against another.

Personalities of Note: The Renier family and their relatives are the center of power and social life in Richemulot. None of Richemulot's single women receive as many suitors as Jacqueline and her twin sister Louise. Both sit at the center of an extensive net of informants (although only their relatives realize that the sisters are wererats and that their information network includes all manner of vermin as well as human spies).

Most folk in Richemulot know that an intense rivalry exists between the Renier twins. Despite the many suitors each receives, neither has yet married, nor has either been known to have been courted by a man for more than a few months. Eventually, all of their suitors either vanish or are found dead.

The Law: Jacqueline Renier has ruled Richemulot for almost twenty-five years. She inherited the rulership when her grandfather Claude died in 726. Devoted to Richemulot and keeping her family in a position of power, Jacqueline has attempted to enforce precious few laws, save one: Each citizen is required to own at least one weapon and swear fealty to the country of Richemulot, promising to rise in its defense should it ever be invaded by Falkovnia or another enemy. Other than needing to adhere to that minor guideline, any person is welcome to settle in Richemulot's cities or empty countryside.

Wererat refugees from other domains are particularly welcome in Richemulot, although they must swear fealty to Jacqueline personally. Most folk do not know that wererats infest the land, but those who do have not yet determined who leads them.

Encounters: Richemulot is not a safe place to wander alone. During the day, the chance for a group of characters to encounter a band of wererats set on sport is 50%. Roll once for a group of player characters. At night roll twice. (If a character is alone or has just one companion, roll for two encounters each day and three each night.) Night encounters are with either wererats or some form of undead.

Darklord of Richemulot

Jacqueline Renier
Wererat, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	10 (6)	Str	11
Movement	12	Dex	16
Level/Hit Dice	3+1	Con	15
Hit Points	18	Int	15
THAC0	17	Wis	9
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	17
Damage/Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Suprise		
Special Defences	Need silver or +1 or better magical weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Jacqueline is a wererat, beautiful but sinister in human form, with just a trace of ratlike features. Her eyes are green with flecks of gold, and her hair is black and sleek, the streaks of gray that have recently appeared at the temples only heightening her beauty. She tends to dress simply, yet alluringly, avoiding extravagance. She is a brilliant conversationalist, well-versed in a wide variety of topics.

Background: Jacqueline was a child when her family discovered a portal into Ravenloft. A team of dogs and a group of vigilante swordsmen were pursuing them through the sewers beneath the city. The Reniers were cornered. Before them lay certain death by a glowing sword. Behind, in an open vault, lay a strange portal filled with Mist. They chose the Mists.

The family entered Ravenloft on the borders of Falkovnia and quickly made their home in the passages beneath the town of Silbervas. Many years later, Drakov finally tired of the wererats' murdering and pilfering. He dispatched a huge expeditionary force to sweep through the sewers, exterminating every creature they encountered. Some of the wererats, including the Reniers, escaped to the countryside. Drakov had anticipated this flight, so his horsemen were ready. When the Reniers fled into the Mists once more, the sound of pounding hooves followed close behind them.

The Mists opened up new lands for Jacqueline and her family. Her grandfather Claude became darklord of Richemulot. The family found the land to their liking, for it appeared complete with cities and sewers. Jacqueline was a dark star, schooled well by her evil grandfather. In the year 726 of the Barovian calendar, she murdered him and took control of the domain. Since then, the population has grown even more with the arrival of refugees from other lands.

Current Sketch: Jacqueline is domineering, manipulative, and mean, reveling in her animal nature. Rats are lusty creatures, and so is Jacqueline. Her curse in Ravenloft is to automatically revert to rat form in the presence of anyone she loves. Normally this would not have affected her; wererats usually do not form bonds of love and marriage. However, it has also been Jacqueline's curse to fall in love. She is enamored of a human male named Henri DuBois. Since her last unsuccessful attempt to make him her wererat slave, his whereabouts are unknown.

Due to her curse, Jacqueline is extremely afraid of being alone. Her monophobia is so severe that anytime she is encountered without her allies and companions, she suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and saving throws.

Jacqueline's sister Louise, her identical twin, is not so cursed, but the jealous darklord usually arranges the death of Louise's lovers in short order.

Closing the Borders: When Jacqueline wants to seal her domain, a horde of giant rats surges from every dark corner and shadow, forming a border at least fifty feet thick. These monsters literally hang from trees if there is no more space to occupy on the ground. Creatures who would fly over them find that the air does not support them. They sink slowly into the throng of rending teeth unless they turn back immediately.

Combat: Jacqueline enjoys all of the normal powers ascribed to a wererat (see the Monstrous Manual tome). In addition, she can become a foul-smelling mist at will. She does not, however, smell like a sewer when in human form, and neither do members of her family. In human form, the wererats of Richemulot are indistinguishable from normal humans.

If wounded to the point of death, she automatically assumes gaseous form and flees. Jacqueline regains 1 hit point per day while in this form. She remains gaseous until her total hit points rise above zero once more.

Regardless of form, Lord Renier can climb any surface, including glass, and she can even cling to the ceiling. When not in human form, she can gnaw through virtually any material if given time. Anyone she injures has a 10% chance per point of damage of becoming a wererat under her control.

Verbrek

The Land: Consisting of a patchwork of woods, marsh, and meadow, Verbrek is a wild, uncivilized land between Invidia, Richemulot, and Mordent. The forests are mostly deciduous, including oak, quaking aspen, and flowering dogwood. The clearings are dotted with thorny shrubs and carpeted with deep, emerald grasses. In autumn, as the leaves drop, the shrubbery bark turns to deep crimson, and the grass turns to gold. A ground fog settles in the hollows at night. Wild game is abundant, especially wolves and weasels, which are prized for their rich pelts.

In a clearing near the southern borders of the domain stands a circle of roughly hewn stones, each twice the height of a man. Natives call it simply the Circle. The packs of lycanthropes that inhabit the domain do not typically interact with each other, except on the full moon following each solstice and equinox. On those nights, the packs meet at the Circle. At this time, they celebrate the hunt, settle legal issues, perform marriages, and trade with each other.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: The majority of the inhabitants in this domain are true lycanthropes - people who are born with lycanthropy rather than infected by it. What human population exists here lives in the villages along the Musarde in an uneasy state of co-existence with the lycanthropes. They live in small, sturdy wooden houses with thatched roofs. The area around each village has been cleared for farming. Most of the humans are peasants or artisans, who survive by selling their goods to either Nathan Timothy (a riverboat capiain who is strangely tolerated by the lycanthropes) or the werewolves of the domain.

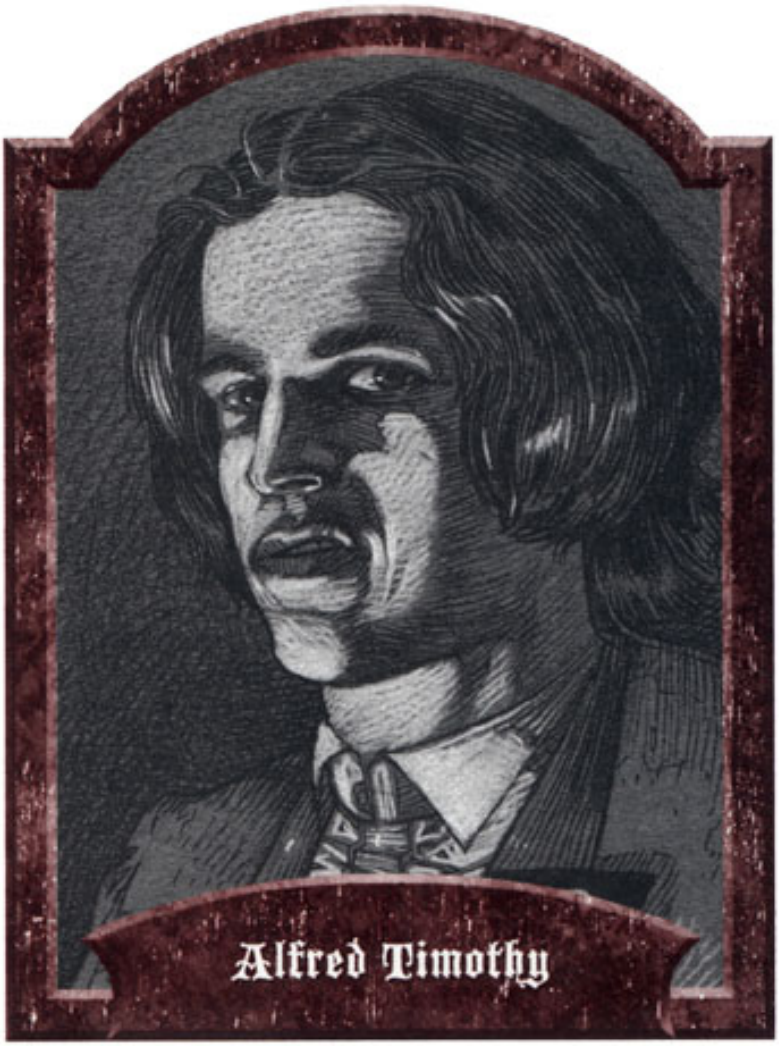
The lycanthropes of Verbrek are organized in packs and have a culture that exists separately from that of the humans. They have their own religion, which is led by the domain's lord Alfred Timothy (son of the aforementioned Nathan); traditions, including rites of passages for the young; and laws.

Native Player Characters: There are no native player characters from Verbrek.

Encounters: Most of the encounters in Verbrek involve werewolves, though a few undead creatures also inhabit the domain.

Darklord of Verbrek

Alfred Timothy
6th-Level Werewolf Priest,
Lawful Evil



Armor Class	10 (5)	Str	10 (16)
Movement	12	Dex	12 (15)
Level/Hit Dice	6	Con	14 (18)
Hit Points	35	Int	12
THAC0	18 (15)	Wis	18
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	14
Damage/Attack	2d4		
Special Attacks	Surprise, spells (5/5/3)		
Special Defences	Need silver or +1 or better magical weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	25%		

In human form, Alfred looks like a frail young man. This appearance is deceiving, for as a werewolf, he is anything but weak. Strangely enough, Alfred Timothy casts no shadow.

Background: Alfred is the son of Nathan Timothy, the former darklord of Arkandale. Nathan paid little attention to his son, so Alfred left Arkandale while still a young man and wandered the Demiplane for a while.

Much later, after a night of slaughtering sheep, Alfred was captured by some townspeople who were going to burn him alive. He was rescued by a band of Vistani. The leader agreed to set Alfred free if he would promise to grant safe passage to all Vistani he might encounter in his lifetime. Though Alfred agreed, as soon as he was set free, he attempted to kill her. Drawn by his treachery, the dark powers granted him the domain of Verbrek.

Current Sketch: Alfred Timothy hates all other forms of lycanthropes and humans. However, he is wise enough to not actively agitate against the surrounding human population, or those of great mystical powers. As such, the werewolves of Verbrek tolerate the Vistani and anyone in their charge. Any traveler who enters uninvited, or without a Vistani escort, becomes "game" - meaning both "prey" and "entertainment". Those caught by the werewolves are stripped of all possessions and informed that they have half an hour to run. When the time expires, the werewolves begin the hunt. If the "game" can make it to the border before the creatures catch up, he lives. In the interest of sport, the creatures may grant extra time to a victim whose ability to flee is obviously poor. Then again, they may not.

Closing the Borders: Alfred Timothy cannot seal his domain completely. To prevent escape, he summons a large group of wolves and werewolves to patrol the borders.

Combat: Alfred conforms to all the normal werewolf abilities with the following exceptions: He is 25% resistant to all magic and is a 6th-level priest of the wolf god. His spheres are all, animal, charm, divination, plant, and summoning. Also, when the moon has risen, Alfred can use any dark shadow as a dimension door to any other moonshadow within the domain.

Sithicus

The Land: This thickly forested domain lies in the southwest region of the Core, east of Valachan and south of Verbrek and Invidia. Massive trees crowd out the sun, plunging the forest floor below into darkness. A tangle of mottled ivy and gray ferns hides the earth from sight, providing perfect cover for snakes, rodents, and insects. The lowlands are filled with bubbling springs and shallow pools. Most travelers stick to the main roads that lead to the domain's principal cities, Mal-Erek, Hroth, and Har-Thelen. These wind their way through narrow valleys or hug the edge of crumbling cliffs.

To natives of Sithicus, its night sky is a reminder of Krynn, the world they are forever isolated from. The sky is apparently moonless, filled with cold pinpoints of light. Natives of Krynn note that the constellations are similar to those of their home world, but with a few important differences. The "platinum dragon" constellation representing the god Paladine has been torn asunder, its stars scattered throughout the sky. The stars in the "five-headed dragon" constellation representing the goddess Takhisis shine brighter than before. Constellations of the other gods of Krynn have dimmed sharply.

Although it is not easily seen, Sithicus actually does have a moon in its curious sky. Mamed Nuitari, this orb is black and can only be seen by characters of evil alignment. These characters can see by its dark light about as well as normal humans can in moonlight. Characters of other alignments can "see" the black moon only by observing which stars wink out in the sky. Nuitari becomes full every eight days.

When the characters enter Sithicus, roll 1d8 to determine the phase of the moon, since its phases affect wizardly magic in Sithicus. Nuitari remains in each phase for twenty-four hours - one day and one night.

Table 2: Phases of Nuitari

Roll	Phase
1	New moon
2	Waxing crescent moon
3	Waxing half moon
4	Waxing gibbous moon
5	Full moon
6	Waning gibbous moon
7	Waning half moon
8	Waning crescent moon

When the black moon is half full to full, wizards of nonevil alignments suffer penalties to their spellcasting, while evil vizards receive bonuses. These effects are similar to the "sinkhole of evil" effects experienced by priests in Ravenloft. (See Appendix Three: Character Classes.)

> Waxing/waning half or gibbous moon - Nonevil wizards suffer a -1 penalty to saving throws vs. spell. Evil wizards receive a +1 bonus to saving throws vs. spell.
>
> Full moon - Nonevil wizards suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws vs. spell and cast nonevil spells at one level lower than normal. Evil wizards receive a +2 bonus to saving throws vs. spell and cast nonevil spells at one level higher than normal.

In addition to these modifications, special conditions apply whenever an evil wizard spell (any that requires a Ravenloft

powers check) is cast during a full moon. Regardless of the caster's alignment, these spells work at two levels higher than normal. Player characters who cast an evil spell incur a powers check increased by 2%.

Only wizards are affected by these changes. Because Lord Soth is not a wizard, his spells are not affected.

The population of Sithicus is almost exclusively elven. Mal-Erek, Hroth, and Har-Thelen are mediocre and have none of the beauty of elven cities elsewhere. The stonework has large gaps, potholes dot the streets, and statues and other works of art have a rushed, half-finished look. The concentric walls that separate the various elven castles are crumbling, books in the city libraries are moldy, and the enchantments that normally hide the entrance to elven cities have been allowed to wane.

Soth's castle, Nedragaard Keep, is hidden between two arms of an eerie ridge, resembling his own Dargaard Keep on Krynn. The castle is a gift from the dark powers of the land. He is joined by the shadows of spirits and undead warriors who also haunted his castle on Krynn.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: Most natives of Sithicus are elves. However, a number of human and half-elf children, fathered by Kartakan merchants living in Har-Thelen, have been born of late, and a small group of Vistani (called the Wanderers) live here. In addition, several kender communities are hidden deep in the domain's forests.

Sithican elves have a general air of apathy about them. Characters familiar with Krynn will recognize their clothing as similar to that favored by the Silvanesti elves of Ansalon a few centuries ago, but their clothing is drab in color and their armor dented and unpolished. Instead of riding proudly into battle on the backs of griffons or hippogriffs, their warriors use horned stag beetles as mounts.

Sithican elves find neither joy nor beauty in the tangled forests and boulder-choked streams. Their songs are mournful dirges, accompanied by low-pitched, droning instruments that evoke a sense of loss.

Despite these failings, they still look down on other races and, to a lesser degree, on elves who are not of Silvanesti stock. In many subtle ways, they make nonelf characters feel unwelcome in Sithicus. Characters are overcharged for supplies, told that no rooms are available at the inns even though there are obvious vacancies, and served last at taverns. Everywhere they go, nonelf heroes receive rude stares. Small children throw mud at them, and residents coincidentally choose to empty slop buckets into the street just as they pass by. The rare elf who actually smiles at the heroes or extends them a helping hand seems a godsend beside the rest.

This attitude reflects the treatment elves of Sithicus get when they leave their own domain. In most other domains of the Core, it is the demihumans who are treated with contempt.

A small, but significant, Vistani population thrives in Sithicus. These Vistani are called the Wanderers, and Soth keeps them trapped in his domain, closing the border whenever he senses these Vistani approaching it. He feels their leader Magda betrayed him when he was first drawn into the Demiplane and wants them to suffer the same imprisonment that he does.

Although Soth destroyed most of the kender that existed in the domain by turning them into kender vampires through dark experiments, a few survived and now live in the woods. They have the reputation of being some of the most violent and xenophobic people of the Core. Natives avoid the areas of the forest that have been claimed by the kender. Visitors to the domain can recognize the boundaries of kender territory by the rotting heads that are spiked to the trees at its edges; the kender of Sithicus thus turn trespassers into "No Trespassing" signs.

Native Player Characters: Typical native heroes are elves. They may belong to any class allowed in Ravenloft, as well as any multi-class combination allowed to elves. However, the magic of elf mages is affected by the dark light of Nuitari, as

detailed above. Heroes from Sithicus are generally not plagued by the racist attitudes of their fellow elves, although there are exceptions. Half-elf and half-Vistani player characters are also found in Sithicus.

Personalities of Note: Mason, the Lord Speaker of Har-Thelen is an elf thief/mage who appears to be a bit more ambitious and upbeat than other Sithican elves. He continues to bully and manipulate the craftsmen of his city to produce decent goods that can be traded with Kartakass, and he has even pressed stonemasons into the city's service so that it may be repaired and maintained. Mason is fighting an uphill battle, though, and rumors have it that his activity is annoying Soth's seneschal, Azrael. He prefers the elves to be docile, or at least direct all their efforts to helping him locating Kitiara Uth Matar, a woman his master seeks.

The Law: Although each of the cities of Sithicus has its own caste of elf nobles - headed by the hereditary ruler knows as a Lord Speaker - all acknowledge the rulership of Lord Soth. They see him only rarely, but all fear his wrath and cringe at the mention of his name. An invitation to visit the High Lord at Nedragaard Keep is generally considered a death sentence. Because Soth can literally raise the remains of the dead to do his bidding, no corner of Sithicus is safe.

Soth's seneschal, Azrael the dwarf, receives careful respect even though he is not an elf. Discourtesy to this servant of the High Lord is sure to have dire consequences.

The laws made by the Lord Speakers are few and typical of what one would expect to find in an elven community.

Encounters: Most creature encounters involve banshees and other undead. Characters have a 33% chance for one incidental encounter during the day, and the same chance three times during the night.

Further Reading: The novel *Knight of the Black Rose* details Soth's fall from grace and the creation of Sithicus. The adventure *When Black Roses Bloom* features Soth's attempt to escape the misery of Sithicus.

Dungeon Masters who want to run a game with Sithican natives might wish to examine the Tales of the Lance boxed campaign set. This product details the world of Krynn, upon which Sithicus is based. This boxed set also provides rules for creating and playing kender characters, although the Sithican kender are not the same cheerful lot as on Krynn.

Darklord of Sithicus

Lord Soth
Death Knight, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	0 (-3 with plate mail)	Str	18/99
Movement	12	Dex	14
Level/ Hit Dice	9	Con	17
Hit Points	89	Int	10
THAC0	5	Wis	9
No. of Attacks	3/2 rounds	Cha	17
Damage/ Attack	ld8+6 (sword of wounding plus Strength bonus) or 1d6 (cold touch)		
Special Attacks	Spells		
Special Defences	Fear aura		
Magic Resistance	75% (see below)		

Lord Soth, a death knight, speaks with a hollow, chilling voice. His eyes glow red behind the visor of his helm, and he wears black plate mail +3 (which reduces his AC to -3). His emblem, a black rose, can be seen embroidered on his clothing and embossed on his shield.

Background: Soth was a fallen knight of the Solamnic Orders on the world of Krynn. When the Kingpriest of Istar was about to call down a cataclysm, the gods gave Soth a chance to redeem himself by saving the world. Soth, however, was distracted from his quest by petty jealousy, and the resulting destruction killed untold millions. Soth himself died in the calamity as well, but he rose again, a fire-ravaged mockery of his former self, cursed to live the length of each life that was lost because of his inaction. Soth existed in an unfeeling, uncaring state for centuries, until the inner fire of a warrior woman named Kitiara Uth Matar stirred something within him. His manipulation of events to cause her death, and his subsequent attempt to make her his eternal companion ultimately doomed him to become a darklord of Ravenloft.

Current Sketch: Lord Soth now reigns from Nedragaard Keep. A gift of the dark powers, the castle taunts him mercilessly, for it constantly changes size and shape so that he cannot maintain the flawless military order to which he is accustomed. Further, boredom presses hard on Soth's eternal soul. No conquests remain for him in Sithicus, and thirty-five years of nothing to do but torment the elves and intimidate Magda the Wanderer has left Soth depressed and despondent. Only the stirring of the dukkar in neighboring Invidia has lifted Soth's spirits even slightly. He hopes war is brewing, and he hopes to have an army ready to participate.

Soth's greatest desire is still to possess Kitiara, and it would appear the dark powers have granted him the opportunity to do so. Soth has heard rumors that a dark-haired warrior woman who matches Kitiara's description exactly is wandering the hills of Sithicus. Whether she is Kitiara recreated in the flesh or a spirit is unclear. Soth pursues her endlessly, yet never catches more than echoes of her passing.

Closing the Borders: On Krynn the death knight was compelled to remember his sins each night in song. In Ravenloft he can seal his borders by repeating this dismal ballad. As he sings, he is joined by the voices of other sinners. The sound, rising from the borders, is so horrid that no mortal can withstand it. All must return to Sithicus or fall hopelessly mad.

Combat: Soth enjoys all traits ascribed to death knights as outlined in the Monstrous Manual tome. He generates fear in a five-foot radius and can cast *detect magic*, *detect invisibility*, and *wall of ice* at will. Twice per day, he can cast *dispel magic*.

Once per day, he can use a *power word* (as per the spell) of his choice. He can cast a *symbol of fear* or *symbol of pain*, as well as a 20-die *fireball*, once per day. All of his spells function as if he were 20th level. In addition, he can *shadow walk to any point in Sithicus*. He merely steps into one shadow and emerges from another at the desired location.

Soth has a magic resistance of 75%. Additionally, on a roll of 11 or less, he reflects the spell back at the caster. In his castle, he need roll only a 22 or less to reflect a spell.

Soth can exert complete control over any lesser undead in his domain and can control other undead of up to 8 HD as if he were a 6th-level evil cleric. Although he is undead, Soth himself cannot be turned or controlled.

If he should ever be slain, Soth's body turns to mist and dissipates. He reforms on his throne in Nedragaard 2d6 days later. During that time, the borders remain open.

Indivia

The Land: Invidia is a southwestern domain cradled between Verbrek, Sithicus, Borca, and Barovia. The Musarde River snakes from south to north across the land and is joined by the Qundar River, creating a lush, twisting valley where huge forests stretch toward the sky. To the north and south, the valley gives way to the hills of Verbrek and Sithicus. Summers here are long and warm, gradually giving way to winter in spectacular displays of color.

More so than any domain except perhaps Verbrek, Invidia remains mostly unspoiled wilderness. At one point, it was ruled by the werewolf Bakholis, who discouraged human excursions into the forests. When he was slain over two decades ago by a young half-Vistana named Oabrielle Aderre, the settlements of the domain became too self-centered to engage in any expansions. With the rise of her son Malocchio Aderre, however, this may change. He is as iron-fisted as Bakholis ever was, and he is actively encouraging trade and interaction between Invidia's towns.

Karina is Invidia's only major settlement, with a population of two thousand people. It serves as a way station for river traffic. Karina is surrounded by vineyards that produce some of the finest wine in the Core. The only other settlement of note is Curriculo in the northern part of the domain (although small villages dot the domain, mostly along the Musarde). This town is home to one thousand people, but a consortium of merchants from Richemulot have started using it as a base for their Invidian activity rather than the decaying town of Karina.

Despite the rise of the violent Malocchio Aderre, Karina's famous Harvest Festival continues to swell the town's population to four or five thousand once a year. For this festival, wine and song lovers from all across the Core flock to the city for a week of wild abandon and pleasure.

Cultural Level: Chivalric.

The Folk: Invidians are a mixed breed, drawn primarily from the racial stocks of Barovia and Kartakass. The language is a bastardized version of Balok, and Barovians and Invidians have little trouble communicating, as long as they speak slowly. As a rule, Invidians dress simply. Men wear tunics, boots, and breeches, while women dress in loose-fitting shirts and colorful skirts.

For some strange reason, crimes of violence and passion are common in Invidia. Grudges fester, arguments grow hot, and pain and sorrow inevitably follow. Invidians view even their own kin with a suspicious or fearful eye.

Rumors state that colonies of werewolves and the mysterious catlike race of shapeshifters known as paka both have communities within the borders of Invidia.

Native Player Characters: All character classes allowed in the Demiplane are found in Invidia. However, characters from this domain cannot be half-Vistani; decades of persecution have driven all such characters from the land.

Invidian characters are known for their short tempers. Whenever confronted with treachery, underhandedness, insults, or baseless accusations, an Invidian must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation or fly into a violent rage and attack the offender, either verbally or physically. Invidian heroes may also choose to take an "enemy species". For Invidians, this can extend to both ethnic groups and nationalities of the Core. They receive a +4 bonus to all attack rolls against this enemy.

Personalities of Note: For decades, Gabrielle Aderre has been the topic of whispered conversations throughout Invidia and neighboring lands. As a young girl, she slew the land's werewolf lord Bakholis when he attempted to force himself upon her.

She then proceeded to claim his castle unchallenged. Strangely enough, this powerful enchantress hated all Vistani, despite her own obvious Vistani blood. However, even more than she hated the Vistani, she hated affection and relationships between those around her.

Although well into her middle years now, Gabrielle Aderre still has the look of a much younger woman. Only the streaks of white hair at her temples hint at her actual age. Roughly five years ago, Gabrielle dropped from sight for a time. When she reappeared, Malocchio Aderre had claimed her home of Castle Loupet. Gabrielle has settled with her lover Matton at Castle Hunadora, where she is an ally of the former Gundarakan government and a fierce opponent of Malocchio Aderre's plans - except perhaps his crusade against the Vistani.

The Law: Malocchio Aderre is currently the undisputed master of Invidia. With mercenaries hired from throughout the Core and troops lent to him by his "brother in the quest for order", King Vlad Drakov of Falkovnia, Malocchio is bringing the entire domain under his control. These mercenaries are 2nd-level fighters, equipped with chain mail and long swords. Two primary laws are enforced in Invidia at present: Taxes must be paid without hesitation to Malocchio's forces, and Vistani must be slain on sight.

This is one of the few lands of the Core in which a Vistani escort may be deadly. Malocchio Aderre seems to hate the Vistani, and his bands of armed thugs attack Vistani caravans on sight, intent on killing all Vistani and any who travel with them. It is known that Gabrielle Aderre shares a hatred for Ravenloft's nomads, although she was never as brutal or as violent as her son is toward them. Out of fear, inhabitants of Invidia also participate in this hatred and violence against Vistani. They do not want to be mistaken as friends of the nomads.

One pocket of Invidia is still not under Malocchio's control: the area which formerly belonged to the domain of Gundarak. The remainder of Duke Gundar's army continues to hold the area around Castle Hunadora, and from here they continue to lay plans for eventually reclaiming their homeland.

Encounters: The chance for an incidental encounter in Invidia is 33%, once each day and once again after nightfall. Away from town, travelers may encounter Malocchio Aderre's mercenaries, werewolves, or common forest animals. Additionally, the stories of the paka are true; they are encountered in the southeastern part of the domain.

Visitors to Karina should beware of the Midnight Slasher, a bloodthirsty stalker in the foggy back streets and darkened alleys. The madman is described in detail in the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II.

Further Reading: The adventure module *The Evil Eye* provides a detailed look at Invidia, as well as the origins of Malocchio and his conflict with Gabrielle.

Darklord of Indivia

Gabrielle Aderre is the darklord of Invidia, but she now shares her prison with her son. Where Gabrielle's dark side has grown from a lifetime of adversity and hardship, her son was born evil.

Gabrielle Aderre
8th-Level Half-Vistana Enchanter, Neutral Evil



Armor Class	10	Str	8
Movement	12	Dex	14
Level/ Hit Dice	8	Con	10
Hit Points	21	Int	13
THAC0	18	Wis	16
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	16
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	*Evil eye*, spells (5/4/4/3)		
Special Defences	Nil		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Gabrielle is a small woman with an intense, charismatic personality. She has hypnotic black eyes, and her hair is long, black, and wild, cascading in waves to the small of her back. Her dark hair and eyes come from her mother, a Vistana, and her pale skin is drawn from her giorgio (non-Vistana) father. She is middle-aged, though apart from a streak of gray hair at her left temple, she looks several years younger, having the carriage and bearing of a young woman. She does not look a day over twenty-five. However, her reflection always reveals her true age. For this reason, Gabrielle allows no mirrors near her.

Gabrielle dresses like a Vistana, in vibrant, layered skirts that swirl around her ankles and blouses embroidered with silver and golden threads. A kerchief often covers her head. Her ears are pierced with large gold hoops, every finger is laden with rings, and gold chains adorn her ankles and neck. She usually walks barefoot, strutting in her finery like an exotic, predatory jungle bird.

Background: Gabrielle's bloodlines link her to Madame Eva, the first Vistana in Ravenloft. She is only part Vistani, however, and is therefore rejected by those of pure heritage.

Gabrielle was born in Richemulot to an outcast Vistana. For many years, the pair wandered the Core, barely surviving by begging, stealing, telling fortunes, and entertaining. Gabrielle's mother, Isabella, taught her daughter the Vistani charms and enchantments, just as her own mother had done for her. Gabrielle often pressed her mother for details about her mysterious father, but Isabella would say nothing except that Gabrielle carried the blackness of his evil heart inside her.

"You must never bear children", said Isabella to her daughter one day. "A man, a babe, a home - these things can never be for you, Gabrielle, because tragedy will be the only result".

Gabrielle grew up bitter and lonely, and she came to blame her mother for that loneliness. Gradually, her mysterious father came to represent an opportunity for happiness in her mind. At nineteen, Gabrielle finally learned about her father, on the eve of her mother's death.

When Isabella was attacked and injured by a werewolf, Gabrielle refused to help until her mother told her about her father. Isabella finally told the story of her past: Isabella had been captured and sold as a slave to a sadistic monster as a young girl, and when she finally managed to escape, she was two months pregnant with Gabrielle.

Gabrielle was stunned. For years she had fantasized about her mysterious father, and now her romantic dream was shattered. Resolving that Isabella was only telling a cruel, hateful lie, she packed her mother's prized tarokka deck (the tarokka deck of Madame Eva) and potions in a sack. She left her mother to what Gabrielle felt was a fitting fate: death by the cruel, monstrous werewolves.

As Gabrielle fled into the darkness, her mother's pleading voice slowly faded, and the screams began. At that point, the Mists closed around Gabrielle and brought her to Invidia, which was ruled by a werewolf lord named Bakholis. The werewolf's retainers captured Gabrielle and brought her to Castle Loupet. Proud and overconfident, Bakholis sought to enslave Gabrielle, but she managed to enfeeble the darklord with her *evil eye* and slit his throat with a silver dagger. With that act, Gabrielle became the new darklord of Invidia, forever imprisoned within the domain and prevented from seeking out her unknown father.

Years passed and Gabrielle slowly became accustomed to her imprisonment. She took many lovers from the small town of Korinna and otherwise amused herself by spoiling the relationships of others. She treated her lovers with disdain, enslaving them with her *evil eye* and discarding them when she eventually grew tired or bored, but none were able to comfort her terrible loneliness. Even the passage of time could not erase her mother's words from memory - that only ill would come from her giving birth to a child. Gabrielle was careful to use medicinal arts to prevent herself from becoming pregnant.

Then, one day, a dark traveler appeared at the gates of Castle Loupet. From the moment he locked eyes with Gabrielle in the great hall, her cruel heart melted under his hypnotic gaze. In the privacy of her boudoir, Gabrielle succumbed completely to the stranger's fiendish charms. When the handsome gentleman disrobed, she thought it hardly unusual to see a pair of black, batlike wings unfold into a canopy of darkness. Gabrielle welcomed the incubus into her embrace.

"You will remember me only as the gentleman caller", the fiend said afterward, his voice carrying the weight of compulsion. Then, he was gone.

Gabrielle gave birth to a boy nine months later. Reaffirming her vague recollections of a "handsome gentleman caller", Malocchio appeared completely human, except for a slight defect: a sixth finger on each hand. In all other respects, Malocchio seemed to be a regular baby.

Despite his cherubic appearance, which was a small comfort to Gabrielle after three days of excruciatingly hard labor, it was quickly apparent that Malocchio was not a normal child. Most obviously, he grew extremely quickly. By the time Gabrielle had recovered from childbirth, Malocchio was already walking and talking.

Gabrielle's suspicions were aroused, so she used the tarokka deck ofMadame Eva to perform a reading on her son and discovered that he was one of the legendary dukkar (a person fated to destroy the Vistani). She felt that for the first time in her life, the powers were smiling upon her. Through her son, she would finally be able to strike directly at the hated Vistani who shunned her.

However, it was Malocchio who would use Gabrielle. Despite her genius in manipulating others, she was no match for her son's fiendish intellect. When he finished toying with her, she was a broken woman, trapped by her own grief, guilt, and impotent rage. It was only through the help of Matton, a wolfwere (and perhaps the only being who has ever genuinely loved Gabrielle), that she recovered.

Current Sketch: When Gabrielle's broken spirit was healed, she emerged a changed woman. At one time, she hated and feared all shapeshifters, but she has grown to love Matton. With that happiness in her life, she is less jealous of the happiness of others and no longer takes as much pleasure in toying with innocent folk.

Nonetheless, Gabrielle remains a cunning, ruthless, and domineering person. She is a master manipulator who relishes spreading anger, fear, and jealousy throughout her domain, only now those efforts are directed at destroying her son.

Unfortunately, he is protected by the curse that was placed on her when she became the darklord of Invidia. Despite her long-time obsession of punishing the Vistani, Gabrielle is unable to directly harm Vistani and is limited in her ability to affect those who are part Vistani, like her son.

While she cannot effectively attack him directly, she can assault his minions and sabotage his efforts. To aid in this, she has usurped a Gundarakan liberation movement based in Castle Hunadora by using her powers to charm most of the band. Further, Matton has been recruiting wolfweres from Kartakass to aid in the effort. With each passing month, Gabrielle's campaign of violence and terror against her son's minions grows more effective.

Closing the Borders: When Gabrielle wants to seal Invidia, a ring of terror encircles the domain. It is neither visible nor tangible, but characters who attempt to cross the border against her wishes find themselves gripped by an unreasoning fear (as the spell, but no saving throw is allowed). Consequently, they flee one hundred yards toward the center of the domain before regaining control of their wits.

Combat: Gabrielle Aderre is an 8th-level enchanter. She has all the basic abilities of a half-Vistani, but she seems to be immune to the "moon madness" that afflicts her fellow giomorgo. She also has the power of the *evil eye*, which allows her to cast any memorized enchantment/charm spell from her eyes once per round, without spell components. Spells cast by her *evil eye* do not count against those she can cast normally. For example, if she has memorized *charm person*, she can cast it through the evil eye as many times as she likes, until she casts the actual spell from her memory. When Gabrielle uses this ability, her eyes flash and narrow like those of a cat. Any character with Vistani blood (or, at the Dungeon Master's whim, any character with "nomadic" blood) receives a +2 bonus to saving throws vs. Gabrielle's evil eye. Full-blooded Vistani are completely immune to her powers and spells.

Gabrielle can also use the tarokka deck of Madame Eva once per day to imitate the effects of any divination spell. However, using this deck causes her excruciating pain.

Spell List: 1st level - *affect normal fires*, *charm person**, *friends**, *hypnotism**, *mending*, *read magic*, *sleep**, *wizard mark*.
2nd level - *alter self*, *bind*, *ESP*, *fog cloud*, *forget**, *ray of enfeeblement**, *scare**, *Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter**, *whispering wind*.
3rd level - *dispel magic*, *hold person**, *spectral force*, *suggestion*, *wraithform*.
4th level - *charm monster**, *confusion**, *curse*, *emotion**, *magic mirror*.

* Can be cast through the evil eye

Malocchio Aderre
The Dukkar, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	3	Str	14
Movement	12	Dex	16
Level/ Hit Dice	5	Con	10
Hit Points	33	Int	16
THAC0	15	Wis	11
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	17
Damage/ Attack	1d3/1d3		
Special Attacks	Evil eye, animal summoning		
Special Defences	Need +1 magical weapon or better to hit; resistant to fire, lightning, and poison		
Magic Resistance	20%		

Malocchio Aderre is a handsome man in his early twenties. He stands six feet tall and has pale skin, a wild mop of midnight

black hair, and dark, penetrating eyes. He favors black clothing and most frequently wears a black velvet doublet, with black trousers and shiny black riding boots. However, a clue to Malocchio's true nature can be found in his hands. Each bears a sixth tiny, clawlike digit beside the pinky. Malocchio's "witch finger" is usually concealed beneath a pair of black gloves.

Background: Born of a union between Gabrielle Aderre and an incubus known as the Gentleman Caller, Malocchio Aderre is a dukkar - one of the evil beings evil who are prophesied to bring pain to the world and ultimately destroy the Vistani. Several dukkars have appeared over the centuries, but Malocchio is particularly dangerous. At one time, he had the power to travel anywhere in the Demiplane, ignoring all borders and boundaries. Most importantly, Malocchio could bring along passengers, including darklords, and thus possibly cause the dissolution of their land.

A dukkar is regarded as a figure of awesome evil among the Vistani, and the Zarovan tribe is constantly watching for signs and omens that one has been born. They failed to notice the activities of the dukkar known as Hyksosa, and he is reported to have caused the Grand Conjunction. Luckily, the Vistani have managed to trap Malocchio Aderre within the borders of Invidia through mystical means.

Current Sketch: After going on a murderous rampage that ended with the trashing of his mother's home of Castle Loupet, Malocchio Aderre evaluated his situation. He realized that Invidia had no strong leaders and he could easily become ruler of the domain. At present, he is Invidia's master, pulling the domain's villages together under one leader for the first since his mother killed Lord Bakholis over two decades ago. He rules through fear, terror, and hired mercenaries.

Presently, Invidia is even more dangerous for Vistani than it was before the dukkar's rise to power. Unlike his mother, Malocchio is not prevented from harming the Vistani, and he does so with sadistic glee.

Combat: Malocchio's combined fiendish and Vistani heritage make him a dangerous opponent. Physically, he is very weak in combat, but as the prophesied dukkar, his magical abilities are terrible indeed. Malocchio's most dangerous power is the *evil eye*. Through it, he may cast a number of enchantment/charm spells, one per round. At will, he may cast *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *suggestion*, *charm monster*, or *fear* using the *evil eye*.

From his tanar'ri heritage, Malocchio gains the ability to call upon wild creatures native to Invidia. He has a 40% chance of summoning 2d6 dire wolves, 1d6 poisonous snakes, or 2d4 giant ravens once per day. Summoned creatures arrive in 1 d4 rounds and will obey Malocchio's commands to the death.

Finally, Malocchio enjoys some of the innate defenses of the tanar'ri. He can only be harmed by +1 or better magical weapons, and he is extremely resistant to fire, lightning, and all poisons (+4 on saving throws for quarter instead of half damage).

Malocchio remains a cruel and sadistic monster. Other living beings are his toys to manipulate or destroy at his leisure. However, like all bullies, Malocchio is devoid of courage. Should he ever meet a truly superior opponent, he will either meekly submit or flee via teleportation.

Borca

The Land: Borca lies in the green, rugged valleys northwest of Barovia, where the vegetation grows wild and lush. In spring and summer, drifts of wildflowers blanket the hillsides. Natives are quick to notify visitors to Borca that they should avoid any water or fruit with a purplish tinge to it. This coloring is a sign of poison.

Barovia's snowcapped peaks, Mounts Ghakis and Baratak, loom on the southeastern horizon, sometimes flanking the rising sun. To the north stands Mount Gries, the tallest peak within the domain.

Borca has four settlements of noteworthy size: Lechberg, population fifty-five hundred; Levkarest, population eighty-five hundred; Sturben, population two thousand; and Vor Ziyden, population one thousand. The Boritsis, a wealthy family that owns virtually the entire domain, built their opulent estates near Levkarest, in the southern region of Borca. The area boasts several public hot springs, but Ivana Boritsi reserves the pools near her chateau for her private use. The Great Cathedral of the Church of Ezra is located in this city.

The second most important family in the domain, the Dilisnyas (distant cousins of the Boritsis), lives on an estate at the edge of Shadow Rift, near Lechberg. Other estates are scattered across the land, though none rival the overwrought beauty of the Boritsi estate.

Cultural Level: Chivalric.

The Folk: Most Borcans are extremely poor, having been heavily taxed by the aristocracy. Often, the people have a sullen and resigned air about them. They speak a dialect of Balok, although most Borcans are also fluent in the fashionable tongue spoken in Dementlieu.

Although it might not appear so on the surface, the aristocracy of Borca are not much better off than the serfs who work the estates - all are tenants of Ivana Boritsi. While many Borcans might feel they could be happier or more prosperous in another domain, few attempt to relocate. Legend has it that any who drink the water of Borca and try to leave will die at the border. Enough cases of this happening have been documented to keep most people from testing the claims.

As for clothing, the peasants favor somber browns, while the aristocracy mostly wear black. On festive occasions, however, peasantry and nobles alike typically dress in bright colors. Here, fashions among the rich are generally a year or two behind those of Dementlieu.

The Law: With the exception of Lechberg and the lands of the Dilisnya estate, Borca is the undisputed property of Ivana Boritsi. The aristocracy here is aristocracy in name only, as they rent their land from Ivana and, in turn, collect rent from the peasants who farm their estates. The other two territories are held by Ivan Dilisnya, Ivana's cousin and head of the "police force" that collects her rent.

At one time, Ivana's police force was scrupulously honest, collecting only the rents that were rightfully hers. However, roughly ten years ago, her distant cousin Ivan Dilisnya assumed control of the police force. Ever since, corruption has run rampant. If muscle or justice is wanted, it must be bought. Bribes, in fact, are required for every political favor, be it simple information, "free" passage on the roads, protection, or actually keeping enough crops to feed one's children. Power means knowing the right people and serving them well. No one dares lay a hand on Dilisnya or Boritsi, however. Those who have tried it have perished in their sleep.

Ivan's strong-arming lawmen are 1st-level fighters who wear leather armor and wield halberds or clubs.

Native Player Characters: Any character class allowed in Ravenloft is allowed in Borca. However, characters only receive half the normal starting money. Borcan natives receive the herbalism nonweapon proficiency for free and two native languages: Balok and the native tongue of Dementlieu.

Personalities of Note: The single most important figure in Borca is Ivana Boritsi. The natives of Borca call her the Black Widow, for her love is a fatal affliction. In Borca, a mother's greatest fear is that Ivana will fancy her handsome, young son and literally love him to death.

Also, a place known only as the House of Lament recently appeared in the southwestern region of Borca. Haunted by a beautiful spirit named Mara, this dangerous estate is shunned by all - and with good reason. (Details on this Pocket domain are given in Chapter Four: Clusters and Pockets.)

Encounters: Those who visit Borca should beware of the ermordenung Nostalia Romaine, whose touch is literally death. She is fully described in the RAVENILOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II. Otherwise, by day or night characters have a 25% chance for an encounter with some of Borca's rich array of wildlife - from brown bears and wolves to wild boars and poisonous snakes. Additionally, the spirits of both Ivana's and Ivan's victims often linger near their death sites. Thus, ghosts, haunts, and poltergeists are disturbingly common here.

Darklords of Borca

Borca is a domain that is prison to more than one darklord. Both of these evil individuals are described below.



Ivana Boritsi
0-Level Human, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	10	Str	8
Movement	12	Dex	11
Level/ Hit Dice	0	Con	22
Hit Points	8	Int	14
THAC0	20	Wis	10
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	17
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Poison kiss		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Ivana is a lovely woman with deep blue eyes and black hair that tumbles over her shoulders in waving tresses. Although Ivana is now well into her sixties, she still looks eighteen. She dresses in alluring clothing, both accentuating her beauty and masking the black heart within her. Her innocent appearance reveals nothing of her power, and she uses this to cruel advantage. She loves nothing more than to enter a crowded tavern, play the helpless female, and incite several men to fight to the death for her favor. Unfortunately, the victor is not likely to enjoy the fruits of triumph for more than a few minutes. Her kiss is as poisonous as that of a black widow.

Due to her curse, Ivana lips and fingernails are a deep blue, but she is a master at makeup, so few have ever even noticed this. When she sleeps, Ivana takes on the outward appearance of a victim of her own poison. Her skin becomes a mottled

gray, her throat and face swell, and her veins protrude, leaving a dark maze of lines over her body.

Background: Ivana is the daughter of Klaus Boritsi and Camille Dilisnya. Her mother was the first lord of Borca, and Ivana was born five years after the domain joined the Core in 684 on the Barovian calendar. Ivana never knew her father. He was one of her mother's many husbands who disappeared due to Camille's habit of poisoning her men when they angered her.

As she grew up, Ivana's mother taught her to mistrust males, yet there remained in her heart a yearning to love and be loved. At age seventeen, she met a young bard named Pieter and was fascinated by his gift for verse and recitation. Even more interesting to her, Pieter loved art above all else and seemed unimpressed by Ivana's startling beauty. She began to woo him in earnest, but to no avail. At last, attempting to understand the power art and poetry had over him, she became smitten with the purity of his artistry. She saw in it a charm and grace that she could never hope to find in herself and fell madly in love with Pieter in the process. When Ivana learned to love his art, Pieter finally began to love her back.

It might have been a happy ending for the pair, but Camille jealously put an end to the young lovers' bliss. She came to Pieter's bed in darkness and tricked him into believing she was her daughter. As they lay together, Ivana came upon them and was shattered by the perceived betrayal of her true love. Camille insisted that Pieter had seduced her and expected Ivana to follow in the family tradition and kill him. She was not disappointed.

Ivana bought a magical contact poison from a necromancer, which became toxic when mixed with the natural fluids of the user's body. It had no effect on her when she wore it, but it was horribly noxious to anyone else. She applied it to her lips and then poisoned her lover with a kiss. Camille sneered at Pieter's "unfaithfulness" and told Ivana that murdering him was the right thing to do. She ignored her daughter's resentment toward her in the matter, and it festered until Ivana at last poisoned Camille in the year 711. The dark powers were well pleased with the depth of her wrath, so they rendered her mortal kiss permanent and made her lord of Borca.

Current Sketch: Ivana is bitter to the core. She destroys relationships wherever she goes and poisons all men who court her. In the meantime, she lives an excessively luxurious lifestyle, supported by her phalanx of "rent collectors", who are nothing more than thugs running a protection racket. She strings them all along by promising that the man who makes her wealthiest will be her consort. When any of them becomes troublesome, she declares him to be the winner. She then poisons him and tells the others that he was untrue to her. They believe her because they each want to be her next lover, ignorant of the fact that even a single kiss from her is lethal.

Ivana publicly disdains romance and love, yet secretly she still longs for companionship. Her curse is to forever pine for another Pieter, but inevitably poison every man she loves.

Prior to the Grand Conjunction, Ivana had but one person she counted as friend. She first met Ivan Dilisnya when they were both children and had steadily corresponded with him over the decades. When the Grand Conjunction came to pass, Ivan sought her out. He was frightened by the apocalyptic earthquakes that shook the land, so he sought her comfort. Ivana, fearful that her subjects would take advantage of the chaos to rise up and kill her, welcomed his soothing presence and took him into her arms. As the Grand Conjunction collapsed, the two lords were in close proximity, so their domains combined. Ivana's is the more dominating personality, so the realm retained the name of Borca, while Ivan's domain of Dorvinia disappeared.

Today the two lords live in their manors at opposite ends of the domain. Where once the two would exchange letters about poisoning techniques, the finer points of creating new venoms, and the sadistic joy they both felt in poisoning their adversaries, they now constantly bicker and plot against one another. Their differences started when Ivan insisted that Ivana share with him the secret of her apparently eternal youth - a secret which Ivana truly does not know - and deepened when she insisted that he make himself useful as head of her police force. Each of them constantly seeks a new poison that will kill the other, yet both remain immune to every toxin, leaving only the people of Borca (and its visitors) to scream and convulse under the effects of each new venom. Both separately and together, they rule the land, rendering Borca doubly

dangerous.

Closing the Borders: Any drink in Borca, even water from a stream, can become a poison that imprisons characters in this domain. Imported beverages act the same. When either Ivan or Ivana wants to seal Borca, a change takes place in the fabric of the land and air at the edge of the domain. The borders become a catalyst for the drink. When someone leaves Borca, the drink turns to lethal poison. The victim immediately feels feverish and woozy and will die in a few turns unless he reenters the domain. The drink remains potent for forty-eight hours and can be triggered as long as the borders are active.

Combat: Ivana is not skilled in the arts of war, relying on hired servitors and her poisonous kiss to defend her. Her innocent appearance softens the heart of even the most brutal ruffian. Those whose hearts cannot be softened often still fall victim to her deadly kiss.

The poison that Ivana used to kill her true love is still active in her system. Anyone who kisses her must make a saving throw vs. poison with a -4 penalty. Success means the poisoned character dies a slow, agonizing death. A failed saving throw means that the character dies instantly. No antidote or magic can cure this poison.

Ivana can instantly detect any poison. For that reason, her cousin has had a very hard time trying to kill her.

Ivan Dilisnya
0-Level Human, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	10	Str	8
Movement	12	Dex	11
Level/ Hit Dice	0	Con	22
Hit Points	8	Int	18
THAC0	20	Wis	15
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	7
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Poison touch		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Ivan is a small, thin man, standing five feet seven inches tall and barely weighing one hundred twenty pounds. His curly hair, gray with strands of golden blond, forms a tangled halo about his face and shoulders. His eyes are bright blue, and he rolls them frequently while conversing. His thin lips are usually drawn up in a quirky grin. Although he is sixty-two years old, he has the vitality of a man half his age.

Ivan is a foppish man who fancies himself a great actor. Aside from his theatrical costumes, he rarely wears the same clothes twice. His costumes include the fittings of a court jester, king, huntsman, paladin, and monk. Twice a week, he dons a costume for the day. Most armor and weaponry that he wears are fake - merely stage props.

Ivan has a soft, tenor voice and a high, rapid laugh that makes listeners cringe. At a moment's notice, however, he can change them both. His laugh slows to a guttural chuckle, and his voice drops to a low, velvety whisper or booms for dramatic effect. He enjoys such changes because he thinks they illustrate his theatrical talents. When he speaks, he gestures dramatically to punctuate his words. At times he paces, waving his arms in exaggerated poses. Most folk find him quite strange.

Background: Ivan's ancestors were visiting the Castle Ravenloft in 351, in anticipation of the great wedding of Strahd's brother Sergei and his beloved Tatyana. Feeling ill, some of them left early. As they rode away from the castle, Strahd murdered the remaining guests, and Barovia was drawn into Ravenloft. The Dilisnyas were spared death, but the Mists were

still able to grab them, so they became trapped in Ravenloft forever.

Boris Dilisnya, Ivan's father, grew up in Barovia. He married Stefania Septow, and they had a daughter, Kristina. In 684 a distant cousin, Camille Dilisnya, became the darklord of Borca, so Ivan's family moved to that nearby domain.

Five years later, under a dark moon, Stefania bore a second child - a boy, Ivan, who was destined to become a darklord of Dorvinia.

At age six, Ivan was torturing animals - sometimes to death. At ten, he poisoned a servant's child after she stole a pastry. Ivan laughed as the poor waif died. Finally, at age twelve, Ivan poisoned his mother. Although he brags about it now, he managed to make it look like an accident at the time. Only his sister Kristina could expect no harm from him. Ivan loved her deeply, and she, blind to his evil, doted on her "dearest little brother". However, she did not remain blind to his evil for long.

When Kristina took a husband, Ivan became intensely jealous, and when she gave birth to a child, Ivan felt completely betrayed. He poisoned her husband, and then poisoned Kristina as she nursed her infant son. A midwife managed to save the baby.

In 710, his own family chased Ivan to the Mists. Ivan was twenty-one years old. Entering them, he found a land to suit his own tastes, and named the land Dorvinia. In 712 Ivan took a bride, Lucretia, and in 716 he took her life. During their union, Lucretia bore three children. Ivan believes they were stillborn, but some say midwives took the babes at Lucretia's request.

When the Grand Conjunction occurred, Ivan's immediate impulse was to seek out his spiritual twin, Ivana Boritsi, who was darklord of Borca. When the Grand Conjunction collapsed, their domains merged.

Current Sketch: Ivan has never lost his fiendish and childish mentality. As a young man he had expensive crav- ings, particularly for fine desserts and rare wines. When he became lord of Dorvinia, Ivan lost his sense of taste. Now, to him all drinks are like bile, all foods are like dust. He feels the loss keenly and would sacrifice virtually anyone and anything to regain his palate. He often hosts elaborate banquets, hoping to enjoy the fare vicariously. Guests who know him well feign indifference to the food. If they appear to dislike it, he is offended, but if they enjoy it too much, he is enraged with jealousy.

Ivan is also starting to keenly feel the weight of his years. When Ivan found himself face to face with his childhood friend Ivana for the first time in over thirty years and discovered that she still looked just as young, fresh, and beautiful as when she was a girl, Ivan was forced to acknowledge his own mortality. Over the past ten years, intense hatred and jealousy have been festering inside Ivan. He thinks Ivana is keeping the secret of eternal youth from him and laughing at him behind his back as he grows old. He has taken com- mand of her rent collectors in the hopes of using them to someday force her to reveal her secret.

It is rumored that Ivan often wakes at night in a cold sweat, calling to his sister Kristina in terror. His attendants dare not mention these events in his presence. Her name is like poison; repeat it to Ivan, and he will make sure the results are fatal.

Combat: Ivan has no combat abilities, but Ravenloft has granted him a deadly power. Three times per day, he can turn any object he touches into poison. Each time, he can choose one of three strengths for his toxin: A "deadly" toxin kills any victim who fails a saving throw vs. poison, a "dangerous" one inflicts 4d6 points of damage on any character who fails the saving throw, and a "malingering" toxin takes hold like a sick- ness. Within an hour, victims of this poison become weak and cannot walk, remaining bedridden for 1d4 days.

Ivan himself is immune to all forms of poison, paralysis, and disease (including magical diseases). In addition to his natural toxins, he can prepare a poison or drug with virtually any effect. His favorite concoction remains in the victim's system for a day, then causes a sudden and violent death. Ivan has an antidote of sorts, but it merely delays the poison for another day. He keeps several retainers on a leash this way; each day they need the antidote or they will die. As long as only Ivan knows

the antidote, they must remain loyal to him.

Ivan has spent so much time working with poisons that he has actually become addicted to one of his own rare creations. As such, his food is usually full of this deadly substance. Thus, many who dine with him do not survive to have dessert.

Borovia

The Land: Barovia rests in the Balinok Mountains. Through the long winters and even into late springs, the peaks are capped with snow and ice. The two highest summits, Baratak and Ghakis, steeply rise to over ten thousand feet. In the summer, snows slip from their granite crags, but the lofty pinnacles stay icy year-round. Only Baratak and Ghakis reach above the tree line; the other twisting ridges are densely forested. The terrain is rough, with frequent outcroppings and small, sheer cliffs. Only the areas surrounding the village of Barovia and the valley of Lake Zarovich are easily traversable.

Barovia's dales begin to green in late spring, and aspens, firs, and pines fill the valleys. Glittering streams twist through the steep, spongy meadows, eventually merging with the Musarde. The Svalich woods surround Count Strahd von Zarovich's castle and the village of Barovia, the sea of trees bleeding into valleys farther east. The Tepurich Forest fills the western valleys

The Old Svalich Road, one of the two regularly traveled routes through the Balinoks, crosses the Barovian domain. The road leads to two major settlements: Vallaki, between the two large peaks, and the village of Barovia, farther east. Vallaki (population fifteen hundred) lies on the southern shore of Lake Zarovich, Barovia's largest lake. Its inhabitants are mostly fishermen, but an equal number of farmers and herders live in outlying plots around the lake. The farms are small affairs, most of them terraced on hillsides. Orchards of hardy Barovian apples form drifts of pink and white blossoms in the spring. Plums, used to make the brandywine tuika, also grow in the valley.

East of Vallaki, the Old Svalich Road climbs a pass, twisting wildly to ease the ascent. From the vantage of the pass, travelers can observe the road as it leads to the village of Barovia. Natives have nicknamed this route the "Devil's Descent".

The village of Barovia and Strahd's castle lie in a valley, surrounded by a rim of dense fog. This fog, ranging from two hundred to five hundred feet thick, is one the domain's most deadly features. The vapor infuses itself around a character's vital organs and acts as a latent poison. It does not harm its victims as long as they remain within the ring of fog, but it kills characters who attempt to leave this small area, passing through the fog without the Count's express permission (and antidote). The Vistani have the antidote and will transport people safely through the choking mists - for a price. However, they never assist anyone without Strahd's approval.

Once inside the ring of fog, the road crosses the River Ivlis, following the river's course toward Barovia. Castle Ravenloft, Strahd's home, is perched on a one-thousand-foot precipice north of the road, brooding over the village.

Over five hundred people inhabit the village of Barovia. The buildings are well-built timber and plaster constructions of two or three stories. Many are even whitewashed. The eaves are often adorned with floral or geometric patterns in yellow and red. A few farmers work the soil surrounding the village, growing mainly potatoes, turnips, and cabbage. Shepherds live outside the ring of fog, tending their animals as best they can. At night, the villagers sometimes hear one of the poor beasts screaming as a wolf takes it down.

South of the Luna River, Barovia lowers to foothills. Several rivers and streams flow through these hills, continuinwest to join the Musarde River in Invidia.

The majority of the inhabitants in this part of Barovia are ethnic Gundarakites, citizens of a domain that no longer exists. They outnumber the Barovians but are essentially kept in an impoverished state by unreasonable laws and excessive taxes. Farmers and herders predominate this area, although craftsmen are found in the towns of Teufeldorf (which has three thousand inhabitants) and Zeidenburg (four thousand inhabitants). At one time, Zeidenburg's weaponsmiths were renowned for their skill. Since the city was annexed by Barovia, however, it is illegal for Gundarakites to possess or even make

weapons larger than daggers.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: There are three distinct ethnic groups in Barovia: Barovians, Gundarakites, and Vistani (who have their only permanent camp here).

Barovians tend to be thick and stocky, with broad shoulders and sturdy hips. Most of them have brown or black hair, but occasionally a dark-eyed blonde is born. The women wear their hair long and loose as a rule, though girls may braid it. Married women always cover their heads with kerchiefs. Most Barovian women dress in dark clothing at all times, as it is their custom to wear black for five years when even the most distant relative has died. The men, in contrast, wear white shirts and embroidered sheepskin vests, donning a black arm band only when an immediate family member passes away. Barovian males often wear droopy mustaches. Though bachelors usually have beards, the older men tend to shave.

In the wake of the Grand Conjunction, Strahd ordered the militias of Barovia's villages to invade Gundarak and take control of its settlements, making the Gundarakites citizens of Barovia. Gundarakites are similar in appearance to Barovians, but their women tend to favor more colorful garb. Unmarried Gundarakite women always keep their heads covered. This leads to frequent, and sometimes bloody, misunderstandings between young Barovians and Gundarakites.

Their different religious beliefs cause an even more severe delineation between Barovians and Gundarakites. Except when conducting funerals, Barovians do not frequent churches. Even weddings are held at village inns. This is primarily because whenever an optimistic young couple would schedule a church wedding, the bride would invariably vanish the night before, only to be found dead a few days later, her body battered and her throat torn open as though by some wild beast. These events and the continuing evil of their tyrant lord have led them to believe that either the gods have abandoned them or are punishing them unjustly for the crimes of their ancestors. Consequently, though each village has a temple or church building, it usually lies in disrepair.

Gundarakites, on the other hand, are very religious. Cinder Gundar, they primarily paid homage to a deity known as Nerull, but since their subjugation by the Barovians, a new faith is gaining popularity. A small Barovian cult, known as the Children of the Morninglord, bases itself in Vallaki, where they maintain a shrine in a decaying church. The members of this faith are awaiting the day when the Morninglord, a being with golden skin and hair of fire, steps out of the Mists and banishes darkness and suffering from the world. The Qundarakites, who briefly knew freedom immediately following the death of Duke Gundar, find this an appealing belief, even if the Barovians do not.

The final difference between Barovians and Qundarakites is one of language. Barovians speak Balok, a language full of unusual consonant combinations, while the Gundarakites speak Luktar, a sing-song language of soft, lilting sounds that Barovians find hard to master. There is only a 10% chance that an individual from one of these ethnic groups speaks the language of the other group, while there is a 20% chance per individual to speak the language of another Core domain. Barovians are currently trying to force the Gundarakites to speak the "civilized" Barovian tongue at all times. This law would join others that the boyars have recently agreed upon, including those that prohibit Gundarakites from purchasing any lands beyond what they currently own, living north of the Luna, and owning boots or large weapons.

The third ethnic group of Barovia is the Vistani. The Zarovan Vistani maintain a permanent camp at the base of Castle Ravenloft, near a pool formed by the river Ivlis. Most Barovians consider them to be amoral thieves, though they still conduct trade with them and pay to watch their shows. However, Vistani are not often allowed to loiter within town limits.

Strahd allows the Vistani great freedom in Barovia. They offer him information about his land and the rest of the Demiplane. In exchange, he grants them safety within his domain. Anyone who encounters a Vistana in Barovia can be sure that Strahd will know of the meeting within a day. Likewise, anyone who harms a Vistana within Strahd's domain is sure to incur his wrath. Many a Barovian bigot has discovered this fact; the lord does not mind the villagers discriminating against

the Vistani, but whenever that discrimination crosses the line to physical violence, the penalty is death. Some even speculate that Strahd and the Zarovan Vistani have a familial connection; the similarities between "Zarovan" and "Zarovich" are hard to miss. However, no scholar has uncovered any such evidence, nor has anyone dared to ask the darklord or the Vistani.

With the exception of the Vistani, the people of Barovia bear the burden of Strahd's yoke every day, so they tend to be surly or gruff. They keep to themselves and try not to cause problems, because troublemakers tend to end up dead - or worse. Most of all, the people of Barovia dread the night. Before the sun sets, all natives are in their homes, with every entry barred and sealed. Neither pitiful begging nor chilling cries of agony will open their doors after nightfall. These folk do not emerge from their homes until the sun has cleared the mountains to the east.

The Law: Count Strahd von Zarovich rules this land. He has lived much longer than any man should, and it is widely recognized outside Barovia that Strahd is a vampire. However, natives of Barovia still believe he is human. They call him the "devil Strahd", but that refers to his personality, not his species.

Strahd is a cruel tyrant, but fortunately, he rules from the shadows. He rarely appears in public, though rumors of his "visits" are common. Strahd does not govern as would a king or prince. He makes few formal commandments, and he does not even collect regular taxes. The latter task is performed by the few boyars (landholders) and burgomasters (mayors) of Barovia, who are also responsible for maintaining the town militias. Still, like the peasants, the boyars and burgomasters bow to Strahd. The lord takes what he wants, be it gold, labor, or lives. On rare occasions, Strahd has established laws. The most notable of these states that anyone who enters his castle uninvited will be put to death. Of course, many invited guests have suffered the same fate.

Native Player Characters: Players can choose to be either Barovians, Gundarakites, or half-Vistani. Any class allowed in Ravenloft can be found in this domain, although wizards are extremely rare. The only spellcasting priests of this land belong to the Cult of the Morninglord. They have major access to the spheres of all, elemental, healing, and sun and minor access to the spheres of combat, wards, and weather. The priests of Nerull do not receive any spells.

Barovians have an irrational fear of the dark. A Barovian character must make a successful fear check before he can go outside between sundown and sunup. However, Barovia is a hotbed of superstition, and all Barovians have a base 5% chance of knowing something about a supernatural creature's weaknesses or vulnerabilities. (For example, if a party is being pursued by an elf vampire, any Barovian in the group has a 5% chance to know that flower petals can ward off the creature).

Gundarakite characters are so used to being oppressed that they must make a Wisdom check whenever faced with an authority figure. If the check fails, the character leaps to obey the order blindly. (However, he will not necessarily place himself in harm's way or attack his own party members). On the other hand, the long-suffering Gundarakites have acquired a keen sense of how to deal with their "betters". Gundarakite characters gain the etiquette nonweapon proficiency without needing to devote a slot to it.

Rules for playing half-Vistani characters are presented elsewhere in this volume.

Personalities of Note: Jezra Wagner, the Ice Queen, a spectre forever seeking the warm embrace of the living, haunts the slopes of Mount Baratak. Her story is detailed in RAVEHLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II.

Additionally, a young firebrand by the name of Ardonk Szerieza has begun to agitate the peoples of Zeidenburg and Teufeldorf against the boyars. He claims that the Gundarakites had more freedom under Duke Gundar and says that they could return to that state if they support the rebels who seized Castle Hunadora.

Encounters: Adventurers who linger or wander carelessly through Barovia are bound to meet up with several different kinds of creatures. Wildlife thrives in the woods - especially deer and rabbits - and songbirds flit through the trees. Rats, which replace the usual peeping rodents, are strangely abundant. Common predators include the wolves that thickly infest the

forests and small, black bears. Ravens and hawks cross the skies by day. At night, owls and huge flocks of bats take wing. Some more sinister creatures prowl the countryside as well, particularly in the woods near Strahd's castle. Foremost among these are Strahd's horrifying zombies.

During the day, characters have a 20% chance for an encounter with a native Barovian creature. By night the chance rises to 33%. These percentage chances apply only to the villages and countryside. Intruders who spend time in or around Castle Ravenloft can expect to encounter virtually any form of undead except liches, which are not tolerated by Strahd.

Further Reading: Strahd and the land of Barovia are featured in the novels *Vampire of the Mists*, *Knight of the Black Rose*, and *I, Strahd*. Additionally, Strahd's castle is presented in minute detail in the adventure *House of Strahd*. More information about the Zarovan Vistani is contained in *Van Richten's Guide to the Vistani*.

Darklord of Barovia

Count Strahd von Zarovich
Ancient Vampire
16th-Level Necromancer
Lawful Evil



Armor Class	1	Str	19
Movement	12, Fl 18(C)	Dex	16
Level/ Hit Dice	16/12	Con	17
Hit Points	62	Int	18
THAC0	10	Wis	17
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	16
Damage/ Attack	1d6+7 (Strength bonus) or by weapon		
Special Attacks	Charm gaze, energy drain, spells (6/6/6/6/6/4/3/2)		
Special Defences	*Contingency* spell, vampire abilities		
Magic Resistance	20%		

Strahd is a tall man at just over six feet tall. His body is lean and hardened from long years as a warrior. His gaunt face has strong features and prominent cheekbones. His eyes are dark and hypnotic, like deep pools with subtle reflections of red light, but when he is aroused or enraged, they burn like redhot coals. His skin is usually pale, but it becomes flushed with each feeding and retains its healthy color for several hours.

When he became lord of Barovia, Strahd's ears developed points, like the ears of an elf. The deformity is subtle, however, and he can readily disguise it by combing his hair over the tips. In order to explain them, he sometimes claims to be a half-elf, but this is untrue.

His fingers are elongated and thin, with long, sharp nails. If he wishes to conceal the nails, he wears soft, gray, lambskin gloves. Like most vampires, his fangs are not obvious unless he wants them to be noticed. He can speak and even yawn without attracting undue attention. However, when he is attacking, the fangs lengthen until they protrude over his lower lip.

Strahd tends to wear black with touches of white and red. His clothing style is the tailored, layered look common to

Barovian nobles. He also wears a large red stone on a heavy gold chain around his neck.

Background: Strahd calls himself the "first vampyr", but the claim seems unlikely, given the diversity of these creatures. Still, he was certainly the first vampire in Ravenloft. The details of his story are set down in the Tome of Strahd, presented in the chapter *The History of Ravenloft*.

It is not known exactly how or why Barovia entered the Demiplane of Dread - whether it was Strahd's pact, the murderous rampage, or a curse on the land of Barovia itself. Perhaps it was a combination of all three. Nonetheless, Barovia did enter the Demiplane and was the first domain of what became the Core.

In time, the land changed to reflect Strahd and his curse. Barovia expanded, encompassing several valleys in the Balinok Mountains. A ring of choking fog encircled the town of Barovia and Castle Ravenloft, and Strahd's control over the creatures in Barovia grew even stronger.

Prior to his fall from grace, Strahd had been a mage of mediocre skill. After his transformation, he dedicated himself to death, becoming a powerful necromancer. (He had little else to do with his time, being trapped in Barovia.) He explored his vampiric nature and powers. In 470, a band of Vistani, led by Madame Eva, entered Barovia. She and her kind had a natural resistance to the powers of the land, and Strahd was in awe. Eventually, Eva and Strahd struck a deal. Strahd would keep them from harm (his own) if they would agree to search for a portal that would release him from the Demiplane. Strahd even gave Madame Eva the secret to counteracting the effects of his deadly fog.

In 542, Azalin the lich entered Ravenloft. Reluctantly, he agreed to serve the vampire lord. Strahd required two things of the lich: that he teach the vampire great magic and that he use his powers to find an escape from Ravenloft. Eventually Azalin became lord of Darkon, which was recently transformed into the domain of Necropolis. The lich's hatred for Strahd is unending, and he very nearly managed to destroy the vampire in 740.

Aside from that near catastrophe, the years have passed and Barovia still stands. In the wake of the Grand Conjunction, Strahd found himself lord over the Gundarakites (subjects of a previous rival, Duke Gundar), and he has been encouraging the Barovians to subjugate them.

Current Sketch: Strahd is a ruthless, cold, calculating genius. Everything he does is for some ultimate goal. Strahd also never takes anything at face value. He always has a contingency plan (or two) for any situation. As an undead creature, time means nothing to him. He is more patient than any mortal. He always plays his cards close to his chest. His plans should usually include anything the players may think up, and he never gives away hints or clues.

He has only two weaknesses. First, he has been powerful for so long that he underestimates the abilities of normal humans. He is definitely egotistical, though he does not often let foolish pride endanger him. It does not bother him in the least to retreat before an opponent.

The second weakness is his eternal love for Tatyana. Her body was never found after she plunged from the tower battlements of Castle Ravenloft, and through the years there have been repeated sightings of women who so closely resemble Tatyana that they could only be her reincarnations. Finding one of these women, obtaining her, and finally winning her love is Strahd's obsession. Strahd would do almost anything to regain Tatyana. He will not act blindly or foolishly for her, but he is willing to take calculated risks. She alone can bring emotion to his soul.

Strahd maintains relations with the Vistani and a few of the other domain lords in Ravenloft, but he treats them like pieces on a chessboard, to be manipulated toward his goals. The Vistani are his primary source of information from other lands, but they also conduct trade and make purchases for him. He cares nothing for his descendants, servants, or minions.

Closing the Borders: Strahd is able to cause the choking mist around his castle and the village of Barovia to spread out over

the entire domain. The vapor infuses itself around a character's vital organs and acts as a latent poison. Once a victim has breathed this fog, he can never leave Barovia without Strahd's express permission (and antidote). If a character attempts to leave, he begins to choke. For each hour he spends outside the ring of fog, he loses a point of Constitution. When the victim reaches 3 points, he falls unconscious. Each point lost below that requires a saving throw vs. death magic, failure indicating death. No known spells or magical items can prevent or otherwise affect the poison. If the saving throw at 0 Constitution is successful, the character has fought off the poison. He recovers one point of Constitution per day and regains consciousness upon reaching 3 points again.

Combat: Strahd is a formidable foe. He has all of the common vampire abilities such as draining levels by touch, charm by gaze, etc. (see the Monstrous Manual tome). As a vampire who is over four hundred years old, however, he is considerably stronger than his common cousins. He is immune to garlic, holy symbols, and mirrors. (He may still be turned by powerful priests and does not cast a reflection, but the mere presence of a holy symbol or a mirror does not bother him.) He can withstand up to ten rounds of sunlight without suffering damage, although the eleventh round would destroy him.

Any victim of his charm gaze must make a successful saving throw vs. spell with a -4 penalty or fall under his power. He may even charm victims in a similar fashion with his voice alone.

Weapons must have a +2 or greater magical bonus to harm Strahd. When he wields a weapon himself, he is not restricted to his character class of necromancer. As a vampire, he can wield any weapon. His high Strength gives him a +4 bonus to attack rolls and a +7 damage bonus. He also regenerates 4 hit points per round, up to his maximum.

Strahd has many types of minions, which he can mentally summon at any time. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds. He can summon 1d 10x10 bats or rats, or 3d6 worgs. The bats cannot attack, but they do confuse, obscure vision, and foil spellcasting. He can also summon 1d10 Strahd zombies or 2d10 Strahd skeletons (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III). Strahd zombies and other undead created by the Count tend to be very difficult to turn and are treated as having one more Hit Die than their type would normally indicate.

As a master vampire, Strahd has created other vampires, most of them female. It is his habit to destroy these lesser vampires after a year or so. He cannot allow too many vampires to prey on the populace or plot to overthrow him.

Unlike other creatures of his type, Strahd does not need permission to enter any home or building in Barovia. In a sense, Strahd is the land; his bond is so tight that he needs no invitation to explore his own domain.

As lord, he can even control many inanimate objects in Barovia. For example, it is known that he can open and close the two main gates on the Old Svalich Road merely by thinking about it, no matter where he is at the time. He has a similar power over the main entrances to Castle Ravenloft. He can sense the passage of any thinking creature through these gates. Once the creatures have passed through the gate, however, he loses track of them. (Anyone entering from the Mists does so without his knowledge.) He also has a horsedrawn carriage that travels the roads of Barovia, unmanned, at his whim. Strahd can sense the presence of thinking creatures near the carriage and knows whether or not they are inside it. He cannot read their minds or tell anything about them, however. The full extent of Strahd's power over objects is not known. It may be that these powers change to suit the whim of the dark powers. On the other hand, Strahd may have such control over all his direct possessions.

During daylight, Strahd falls into a coma and appears dead to all normal or magical tests. He can sleep anywhere within Barovia and recover lost hit points. He prefers coffins, but any resting place free of sunlight will do.

Today, Strahd is an accomplished 16th-level necromancer. (In life, he was merely a 5th-level mage.) The Demiplane converted his skills to necromancy, and his skills have steadily grown.

Strahd keeps a contingency spell active at all times. It states that when he is exposed to paralyzing or destructive light, he is

instantly teleported to a secret coffin hidden in a cave in the mountains. There, he can heal until he is ready to seek vengeance.

Magical items are rare in Ravenloft, but Strahd has a small collection. His most prized item is a crystal ball. With it, he monitors his domain, as well as many events beyond his borders. The bloodstone pendant Strahd wears is an amulet of proof against detection and location. He also wears a cloak of protection +2. On his left hand is a ring of fire resistance. Stored away in his armory he also has a sword +7, +2 us. magic-using and enchanted creatures.

Spell List: 1st level - *affect normal fires*, *burning hands*, *comprehend languages*, *dancing lights*, *hold portal*, *magic missile*, *protection from good*, *read magic*, *shocking grasp*, *unseen servant*;
2nd level - *alter self*, *darkness 15-foot radius*, *ESP*, *fog cloud*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *locate objects*, *spectral hand*, *stinking cloud*, *Strahd's baneful attractor*, *vocalize*;
3rd level - *augment undead*, *dispel magic*, *explosive runes*, *feign death*, *fireball*, *ground fog*, *gust of wind*, *hold person*, *lightning bolt*, *nondetection*, *tongues*, *vampiric touch*;
4th level - *contagion*, *corpse whisper*, *detect scrying*, *dimension door*, *enervation*, *eyes of the undead*, *ice storm*, *mimic mortal*, *neverending nightmare*, *polymorph other*, *polymorph self*, *rain of terror*, *solid fog*, *suppress lycanthropy*, *wall of ice*, *wizard eye*;
5th level - *animate dead*, *avoidance*, *feign undead*, *magic jar*, *pass wall*, *sending*, *soul anchor*, *stone shape*, *Strahd's malefic meld*, *summon shadow*, *telekinesis*, *teleport*, *wall of stone*;
6th level - *antimagic shell*, *contingency*, *control weather*, *death spell*, *guards and wards*, *invisible stalker*, *stone to flesh*;
7th level - *delayed blast fireball*, *finger of death*, *force cage*, *limited wish*, *misty summons*, *spell turning*, *Strahd's frightful joining*;
8th level - *clone*, *maze*, *symbol*.

Kartakass

The Land: Kartakass is a heavily forested domain with very few settlements in the rugged foothills of the Balinoks. The hills are riddled with caverns, both small and large. Fog is common in low areas, rising from the soil as the afternoon sun begins to wane. The brush is dense, the ground is rocky, and the way through the trees is twisted. When straying from a road or clearing, riders on horseback barely move faster than a man on foot. When fog sets in, riding off-trail becomes impossible; riders must lead their mounts, while clearing the branches aside with an outstretched hand. The wolves in Kartakass are unusually bold. They often wander the streets of the towns at night, and they can breach any gate not securely fastened.

The town of Skald, near the center of Kartakass, is home to nearly two thousand people. The place is known for its sheep, which have particularly fine wool. The houses are almost all one story, with wooden frames and steep, densely thatched roofs. The homes have many small, arched windows, each with heavy, blue or green shutters that can be locked and barred from inside. Villagers must labor continuously to maintain the thatched roofs because night birds pick mercilessly at the straw. To avoid the problem, a few wealthy men have capped their homes with imported red tiie.

The village of Harmonia, in the south, shelters about fifteen hundred people. They claim to have the finest singing voices in Ravenloft, and only the people of Skald dispute this. Harmonian architecture matches the description above, but the houses are larger. Villagers harbor livestock under their own roofs, in separate quarters at the rear of the house. Despite such precautions, their animals still fall prey to foxes and wolves.

Kartakans clear the land around each settlement for farming. Vegetables with bulbous roots thrive in the black Kartakan soil; beets grow to be ten pounds or more apiece. These dark red bulbs and their green leafy tops are staples in the local cuisine.

Berries called meekulbern grow in wild, thorny thickets in the Kartakan hills. Natives distill the berries into meekulbrau. Reputedly, the bitter brew relaxes the throat and sweetens the voice. This acquired taste is despised by most foreigners.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: Most Kartakans have fair hair, blue-violet eyes, and pale complexions. Occasionally, a raven-haired child is born, with the same ivory skin and startling gaze. They are a lean, graceful breed.

Kartakans have rich, melodious voices - the kind granted to angels or sirens. The people have a melody for every labor, a song for every occasion. Their music drifts through the forests and echoes across the hills. Many tunes seem filled with sorrow, but in general Kartakans are content with life and fear only marauding wolf packs.

The language spoken in Kartakass is similar to that spoken in Hazlan, yet oddly enough, it shares many elements with elvish; foreign heroes who know either of those languages have a 5% chance of understanding any conversation, with an additional 1% added to that chance for each day spent among the populace.

The people of Kartakass love nothing more than a good story. Most can spin yarns easily, due to years of practice. As the wolves prowl outside at night, families gather at the hearth to exchange tall tales. They call these tales feeshkas (meaning "little lies"). A visitor who asks a Kartakan a simple question is likely to hear a believable tall tale that sends him on a wild goose chase. The natives try the same tricks on each other and are good natured about being the victims of such a ruse. No one, however, deliberately sends a friend on a chase that may very well strand him in the wilderness at night.

Native Player Characters: All allowable Ravenloft classes are permitted to Kartakan natives. Every Kartakan hero gains the singing nonweapon proficiency for free.

Personalities of Note: Harkon Lukas, Meistersinger of Skald, is the domain's most famous bard and greatest expert in traditional and divine songs. The people of Kartakass revere him for his talent and his stoicism in the face of personal suffering. Many songs have been written about Akriel Lukas's attempt to slay her father and Harkon's own attempt to establish a relationship with his illegitimate son, Casimir. Harkon never performs these songs himself.

The Law: Kartakass has no central government. Each village has a Meistersinger - a kind of singing mayor - who sets rules and arbitrates any and all disputes in that village and its surroundings.

The Meistersinger also instructs the children in music. Kartakans believe that the gods handed down many of their songs. These divine songs, called mora, teach lessons about morality, goodness, and happiness. The Meistersinger nurtures order and harmony in the village by passing on these moral lessons. Knowledge of mora, and the ability to interpret and sing them well, determine his stature in Kartakass. Each village holds an annual singing and storytelling contest to determine who will be Meistersinger, but incumbents usually retain their positions for many years.

Encounters: Each day, characters have a 50% chance for an incidental encounter. Each hour during the night, they have a 25% chance for an encounter. At least half of these encounters will involve wolves - normal wolves, dire wolves, werewolves, wolfweres, and (in winter) winter wolves.

Further Reading: Harkon Lukas's conflict with his daughter Akriel is detailed in the adventure Feast of Goblins. Harkon and his son Casimir are featured in the novel Heart of Midnight, while the Meistersinger's attempt to escape the Misty bounds of Ravenloft is detailed in Death of a Darklord.

Darklord of Kartakass

Harkon Lukas
7th-Level Wolfwere Bard, Neutral Evil



Armor Class	8 (3)	Str	14 (18)
Movement	12, Fl 18(C)	Dex	16
Level/ Hit Dice	16/12	Con	15 (18)
Hit Points	62	Int	16
THAC0	10	Wis	10
No. of Attacks	1 (2)	Cha	18
Damage/ Attack	By weapon or 2d6/2d6		
Special Attacks	Singing, spells (3/2/1)		
Special Defences	Iron or +1 weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	10%		

As a wolfwere Lukas can assume three different shapes at will: humanoid, half wolf, and dire wolf (each transformation takes one round). Dire wolf is his natural form, but Harkon does not favor it as do other wolfweres. As a humanoid, he can choose which race to imitate and can assume both male and female forms. His appearance in each race and gender is always similar, however. In the stat description above, the numbers in parentheses reflect his half-wolf state unless otherwise noted.

In human male form, Harkon is a bard of exceptional charisma and physical beauty. He stands six feet two inches tall, and he is well muscled with perfect proportions. He has thick, wavy black hair, a finely trimmed black beard, and a long, pointy mustache. He frequently wears a fine costume of azure silk trousers, a white ruffled shirt, and a gold coat. A wide-brimmed, blue hat with a white feather tops the costume. The baggy trousers are tucked into shiny, black leather riding boots. Bits of small jewelry - rings, necklaces, etc. - and a wide, black leather belt with silver buckle complete his dress. He may be encountered wearing almost any fancy costume, however. The only constants are a monocle (for which he has a strange affection), an elaborately carved harp, and a sword with a finely crafted basket hilt.

As a human female, Lukas has dark brown eyes, a bewitching smile, and gleaming black hair that falls to the waist. Her feminine beauty is breathtaking. She wears loose scarlet pantaloons tucked in boots, a white flowing blouse, and a short open vest of gold brocade.

In half-wolf form Harkon stands seven feet tall. His clothes, which fit his human form loosely, can accommodate the change. His head becomes that of a wolf, and his body remains human, though covered with fur. He sprouts no claws, but sharp, canine fangs offset the loss.

Background: Lukas grew up in Cormyr, where he was a misfit among wolfweres. He asked too many questions and hated solitude, which was unnatural for his species. Also, unlike his chaotic brethren, he made long-range plans. Larger and stronger than most of his kind, he was left to himself more and more - precisely the opposite of what he desired. When he reached adulthood, Lukas attempted to unify a group of wolfweres into a small tribe. Of course, the solitary creatures shunned him.

Lukas seethed with rage and embarked on a killing spree through the farmlands of Cormyr, venting his wrath on the innocent. When his rage cooled, he decided to enter the world of men, for these extremely expressive creatures fascinated him. He traveled as a wandering minstrel for many years, killing mostly farm animals and vagrants. He felt superior to his

kind, but he lacked purpose or significance.

One fog-filled night in a small village, Lukas was strolling the streets making evil plans. He was destined for greatness - of that he was sure. If he could not command his fellow wolfweres, he would become a ruler of men in Cormyr. Lost in thoughts of tyranny, he failed to notice when the village faded away and the landscape of Barovia took its place. The year was 610 on the Barovian calendar.

Lukas felt that the fates had cursed him. Had they not swept him to this strange place in an attempt to rob him of his destiny? He was angry and desperate, and only the warm, familiar taste of blood seemed to calm him. For a long time, he hunted and killed the wolves and werewolves that infested the mountainous landscape. Then, one night, he came face to face with Barovia's vampire lord, and Harkon Lukas barely escaped with his life, fleeing into the Mists. When he emerged, he was the lord of Kartakass.

Current Sketch: Harkon's greatest desire is to rule. He is clever, persistent, calculating, and quite capable of making long-range plans. The dark powers gave him an entire domain to rule, yet it has nothing of consequence for him to control. Kartakass has only a few small villages, and the forests are filled with normal wildlife. In his eyes, being the darklord of Kartakass is a pale shadow of what true rulership means.

Most wolfweres are chaotic, but Harkon's alignment is neutral. Perhaps some vestige of normalcy remains, however, because his personality is subject to change. Usually

Harkon is a jovial creature with an evil twinkle in his eye. Insults and sabre-rattling leave him unperturbed. If thwarted, however, he is subject to extreme mood swings. His fits of rage result in horrible violence that can last for days. He is always quiet and reclusive after such a fit, however. During these periods of calm, he produces his most audacious plans.

Harkon has an abiding hatred of werewolves and vampires. He has been known to hunt and destroy these creatures, even if the hunt takes years. He has an affinity for humans and elves but gets along well with any of the humanoid races. (Still, he never lets such emotions get in the way of a good meal.)

Closing the Borders: When Lukas wants to seal his domain, those who try to leave hear a sweet song that lulls them to sleep. No spell or saving throw can prevent this, though player characters often try. The characters awaken 1d6 turns later, but if they try to move toward the border, they will simply fall back asleep. (In the meantime, however, a pack of wolves may come upon them.)

Combat: Harkon Lukas has all of the normal abilities of a 7th-level bard and a wolfwere (see the Player's Handbook and the Monstrous Manual tome for full details). Only weapons of +1 or greater enchantment, or weapons of iron, can harm wolfweres.

The dark powers have given Lukas one additional ability. If he dies in combat, his spirit enters the body of the nearest dire wolf. The wolf immediately gains all of Harkon's abilities and attributes, including total hit points. Harkon inherits the current state of the wolf's body, including injuries and spell effects. No one knows if Harkon can die of old age. It has not happened yet, and he is almost two hundred years old.

Lukas can command any normal animal in his land, but he usually reserves this ability for the wolves, which are his favorites.

He carries an elixir of madness, which he brews himself. It is a weaker form of the normal potion, and its effects can be countered with a neutralize poison spell or the equivalent. His favorite tactic is to trick or entice a person to drink it. Once the victim is mad and confused, the wolfwere slowly eats him, trying to keep his victim conscious as long as possible.

The sword he carries is a cursed berserker +1 that came from the land itself when Kartakass was born. When faced by enemies in melee, the sword forces its wielder to fight to the death, attaching itself to his hand. When Harkon is not in combat, he can drop the sword and even leave it miles behind. When he faces an enemy, however, the sword instantly appears in his hand, and he is forced to fight to the death. The sword only functions this way if Lukas is in human or half-wolf form; in wolf form, he has no hand to hold the sword. If Harkon is using the weapon, he cannot change to wolf form until the fight is over.

Harkon has learned to live with this curse and has developed strategies to make it work for him. For instance, when he dies and his life force inhabits the body of the nearest dire wolf, he can run away, leaving the blade behind. It will appear when he needs it again.

Lukas often uses the sword to play an evil trick: When he first meets a group of wanderers, he volunteers to leave his sword in the branches of a tree at least one hundred yards away (as a sign of his good will and peaceful intentions). If that does not calm his victims, he offers to let them hold the sword. He knows that if a fight begins - even if he starts it - the sword will appear instantly in his hand.

The harp he carries has a simple magical property. When Lukas plays certain melodies of his own composition upon the harp, the music draws 3d4 dire wolves from the outlying area. The beasts arrive in 2d6 rounds. Once they are within sixty feet of the wolfwere, the dire wolves recognize his scent and obey his commands. Some of these melodies he has composed will sumon 1d6 dire wolves even without the magical harp. As a twisted joke, Lukas sometimes teaches these melodies to innocent travelers and lets them summon their own fate.

As a bard, Lukas has the following abilities: climb walls, 80%; detect noise, 50%; pick pockets, 30%; and read languages, 35%. He also can cast a few simple spells, which are listed below. The mix appears random and unplanned; he acquires spells as the winds of fortune place them before him.

Spell List: 1st level - *enlarge, grease, magic missile, phantasmal force, Tenser's floating disc*.
2nd level - *darkness 15-foot radius, knock, spectral hand*.
3rd level - *gust of wind, vampiric touch*.

Forlorn

The Land: Forlorn, one of the Core's oldest and smallest domains, is nestled between Barovia, Kartakass, and Hazlan in the Balinok Mountains. The land is forested and lush, but few normal animals live here. Forlorn has no villages, and the only obvious sign of civilization is the decaying, seemingly abandoned Castle Tristenoira. This structure stands perched upon the red-granite cliffs that surround the Lake of Red Tears.

Those who have visited the domain tell tales of sea monsters lurking in the lake's impenetrable depths and of a vampyre called Tristen ApBlanc, who rules Forlorn from the castle. Some also claim he can alter the appearance of Castle Tristenoira, changing it from a decayed ruin to a bustling, elegant home in the blink of an eye. Still, most of these tales are dismissed as the ravings of mad men.

Cultural Level: Iron age, although Castle Tristenoira is evidence that a more advanced society once existed here.

The Folk: Forlorn is largely populated by goblyns (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II), who systematically raze the forests and play strange, violent games. A few tiny conclaves of human druids vainly attempt to deliver the land from evil, but the goblyns hunt them. Fearing for their lives, these druids are careful to remain hidden from sight most of the time.

Native Player Characters: There are no native player characters from Forlorn.

Encounters: Zombie wolves (see the Castles Forlorn box) and gremishkas (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III) may occasionally attack travelers, but goblyns are the main threat and most common creatures found throughout this domain.

Further Reading: For more information on this domain and the tragic history of its lord, see the Castles Forlorn boxed campaign adventure.

Darklord of Forlorn

Tristen ApBlanc
Fourth-Magnitude Ghost/Vampyre,
Neutral Evil



Armor Class	0	Str	18/76
Movement	9 (ghost); 12 (vampire)	Dex	16
Level/ Hit Dice	11	Con	12
Hit Points	88	Int	16
THAC0	11	Wis	8
No. of Attacks	1 (ghost) or 3 (vampyre)	Cha	19
Damage/ Attack	Age 1d4x20 years (ghost) or 1d4/1d4/1d6 (vampyre)		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	40% (ghost) or nil (vampyre)		

Tristen ApBlanc himself is far from legend. He rules Forlorn from Castle Tristenoira, but he is trapped there by several unusual circumstances. Primarily, the castle exists at an unstable point in time. Castle Tristenoira and its inhabitants constantly shift back and forth across temporal reality, reliving the same events over and over. Further, due to an unusual curse placed on him by a druid who was killed by Tristen after attempting to cure him of vampirism, he exists as a highly charismatic vampyre during the day, but as a ghost by night.

Background: Tristen's father, Rivalin was killed by a scavenging vampire, who drained his life away after he was injured in battle. Rivalin died with his wife's name on his lips. When he arose as a vampire, he immediately flew to her, but his conflicting feelings of love and hunger maddened him. He fed on his wife, but he could not bring himself to kill her. Thus, Tristen was born with vampirism in his veins.

Eventually, Tristen's parents were killed by a mob, and he was reared by druids. At the age of fifteen, Tristen began to exhibit signs of vampirism. He determined that he must actually be a vampyre (not a vampire), since he was still alive. Tristen become obsessed with this obscure race of living bloodsuckers, learning everything he could about them.

When his adoptive mother discovered his secret, Tristen killed her and drank her blood. As she died, she cursed him to never leave the sacred grove and to live eternally to rue his evil. By coincidence, she had just imbibed holy water, so Tristen died alongside her.

Tristen's curse caused him to rise that night as a ghost anchored to the grove of sacred trees around the murder scene. Strangely, he regained mortal form the next morning, though now he was a true vampyre. During the day he walks the halls of his castle (built on the site of the sacred grove) as a vampyre, but each night he dies a searing death and becomes a ghost once again.

Current Sketch: For over five hundred years, Tristen has been trying to break the curse that binds him to his castle, but nothing has worked. As darklord, he has even mentally commanded the goblyns to destroy the forest and slay the druids as revenge for what has happened to him.

Closing the Borders: Rumors claim that those trying to leave Forlorn without the darklord's approval find themselves

paralyzed, unable to move even through the aid of a *remove paralysis* spell.

Combat: Tristen's battle capabilities depend on his current form. As a fourth-magnitude ghost (see *Van Richten's Guide to Ghosts*), he has the following abilities: He can accelerate aging in mortals who meet his gaze; he can keen twice per night (forty-foot radius, -1 penalty to saving throw vs. death); he can cause revulsion in those he touches (successfully save vs. paralysis or suffer a -6 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and proficiency checks for one week); and he can dominate victims as they sleep, taking control of their bodies until dawn if he chooses (negated by a successful saving throw vs. paralysis with a -2 penalty). All attempts to turn him are made with a -4 penalty. As a ghost he may be struck only by weapons of +3 or better enchantment, although ethereal foes need only +1 weapons. At night, Tristen can also rejuvenate to full hit points in one round, but he must have complete rest for two full turns after doing so. While resting, he is completely helpless.

As a vampyre, Tristen's main ability is to charm (as per the spell) victims of his bite. The victim's saving throw is modified by -1 for every 2 points of damage his bite inflicts, During the day, Tristen also enjoys a few vampiric abilities, inherited from his father: He receives a +2 bonus on attacks and a +4 damage bonus due to Strength; weapons of at least +1 enchantment are required to hit him; he can summon 2d6 wolves or worgs three times per day (they arrive ii 1d6 rounds and remain under his control for 2d4 rounds); and he can take the form of a worg at will.

Tristen's worg form: AC 2; MV 18; #AT 1; Dmg 3d12; SZ L; ML 16. (All other stats are as a vampyre. In this form, Tristen cannot charm with his eyes.)

Hazlan

The Land: Hazlan lies south of Barovia and Nova Vaasa, in the southeastern corner of the Core. The eastern half of this domain spreads into lazy, rolling hills that are grassy and easy to travel. In the west, the Balinoks rise up, making the terrain rocky and rough. The northern part of the land is largely uninhabited wilderness, although a small village has sprung up on the estate of the land's ruler, Hazlik.

Hazlik ordered the settlers to build this remote village at the base of his mountain, so that he could teach the arts of magic to a few chosen ones. The village, named Ramulai, is currently home to Hazlik's apprentices and roughly two hundred fifty others. Should Hazlik continue to train mages, Hazlan may well become the center of arcane arts in the Core.

Hazlan has two major towns, Toyalis and Sly-Var. Toyalis houses eight thousand people, and conducts limited trade with Immol in Barovia; Immol produces pottery and finely crafted bowls and other implements needed for certain magical rituals by the growing number of wizards in Toyalis. Sly-Var is home to about forty-five hundred people, mostly farmers and herders. Both towns consist of simple, white-washed wooden homes with red tile roofs.

The village of Ramulai is somewhat more impressive; built to the specifications of Hazlik, it is a compact settlement of stone buildings with slate roofs. The stones are quarried through magical means on the nearby border with Barovia and Forlorn, and the construction of the town is an example of the practical applications of magic.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: The folk in Hazlan are sharply divided into two groups: the ruling class and the lower class. This division is made primarily along racial and ethnic lines.

The majority of the population are of Rashemi stock. They are a tough and sturdy people, averaging a little over five feet in height, with dusky skin and dark eyes. The men often wear bushy beards. The women tend to be slightly shorter than the men, and they wear their black hair long, often in elaborate braids. The Rashemi dress simply - in baggy trousers, tunics, or smocks. Jewelry is rare, though an occasional earring, bracelet, or ring can be seen. Both genders are hard workers and make good warriors - a necessity, as they are the working class of Hazlan, subservient to the other ethnic group in the domain, the Mulan.

The Mulan are tall and fine-boned, with sallow complexions. They shave what little body hair they have, usually replacing it with elaborate tattoos. By tradition, men's tattoos consist of geometric shapes and stylized representations of dragons and legendary monsters. Women are tattooed with cryptic runes and abstract designs. Receiving one's first tattoo is a sign of adulthood among the Mulans. Due to the Mulan affinity for tattoos, Hazlan is home to the Core's finest tattoo artists.

As mentioned above, the Mulan make up the ruling class. They own most businesses, pay more lenient taxes, and are the only ones who may sit on Hazlik's ruling council. None of this is surprising if one realizes that Hazlik, himself, is Mulan.

Unlike domains with similar splits between ethnic groups, no linguistic or religious barriers divide the Hazlani ethnic groups. They all speak a tongue known as Thayvian, which shares similar linguistic roots with the language spoken in Nova Vaasa. A Vaasan and a Hazlani can understand each other's native tongues as long as both parties speak clearly and slowly. The only legal religion is that devoted to the god Bane. While priests and worshipers are drawn from both ethnic groups, they worship in separate churches; further, the heads of the church are all Mulans. (Note: Those familiar with the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting should be aware that Hazlani priests of Bane still receive the spells, despite his demise.)

There are two things in Hazlan that Mulans and Rashemi are perfectly equal in. The first is that they basically devote all their efforts to pleasing Hazlik, and he is a tough man to satisfy. The governors relay his commands, and the folk obey each one instantly. Noncompliance means death or a trip to "the tables;" a simple misunderstanding may even mean the same. "The tables" are where Hazlik and his apprentices perform their evil experiments. Fear of this fate makes Hazlani natives paranoid and distrustful. Second, Hazlik's apprentices are drawn from both ethnic groups. The only requirements to study magic under Hazlan appear to be an aptitude for the art and status as a native Hazlani. This has sent shockwaves through Mulan society. They do not understand how their leader could betray Mulan superiority in such a fashion.

Native Player Characters: Players may choose to be either Mulan or Rashemi. Mulan heroes receive the reading/writing and etiquette proficiencies for free. Rashemi heroes receive half the normal starting money, but they each receive a +1 bonus to their Strength scores (to a maximum of 18).

All classes are permitted, though wizards from this domain are still very rare. (Until five years ago, Hazlik had outlawed sorcery in his land.)

The only priests who can safely serve their gods openly are those of Bane. This is the only allowed church in Hazlan, and it preaches that those who rule do so through divine providence. Bane punishes most severely all who would attempt to reach above their station. It should come of no surprise that the doctrine of Bane holds that he is the highest of all gods worshipped in the Demiplane. His priests have major access to the spheres of all, combat, healing, necromantic, and sun and minor access to the spheres of numbers and wards.

During the Grand Conjunction, Bane ceased to grant spells to his priests. The debate over why this happened has caused a minor split in the church. Some believe Bane was punishing his priests for not preventing the catastrophic reshaping of the world, while others believe that Bane was somehow incapacitated by the event. Whatever the reason, however, the Church of Bane is actively watching for signs that another such event is about to occur. If they believe someone or something might be attempting to force such a cataclysm, they will move swiftly to stop it from happening.

Personalities of Note: Hazlik, the Red Wizard, has been the most important figure in this realm since the Mists revealed it over thirty-five years ago. However, in their own way, his small, faceless council of Mulans are perhaps just as important. Since no one is sure who sits on this council, powerful Mulans are generally careful about speaking ill of their ruler. They never know if they are speaking to one of his inner circle.

A young Rashemi woman has come to the forefront recently. Eleni is the most skilled student at Hazlik's academy. Exceedingly fair of visage, she has shocked Rashemi and Mulan alike by shaving her hair and tattooing herself in Mulan fashion. The designs on her tattoos are unknown to all, thought by some to be magical sigils known only to Hazlik. Eleni has even been seen around Hazlik's court, but the despot's business with her has not been revealed.

The Law: Hazlik, an evil wizard, rules this domain undisputedly. Every inhabitant knows that he is the absolute dictator. His small council of governors (basically killers) enforces his rules. Most of Hazlik's enforcers are 1st-level fighters equipped with scale mail and war hammers.

Encounters: Hazlan is a cornucopia of strange creatures, many of them misshapen by magical experiments. Characters have a 33% chance for an incidental encounter twice a day and three times at night.

Darklord of Hazlan

Hazlik
12th-Level Human Invoker,
Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	10	Str	8
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/ Hit Dice	12	Con	10
Hit Points	45	Int	17
THAC0	17	Wis	1
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	9
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Spells (5/5/5/5/5/2)		
Special Defences	Spirit transfer		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Hazlik is a man in his seventies. He is completely bald, and his head is tattooed with many strange and arcane symbols, He sometimes wears a goatee, but no mustache. His left eye is brown, and his right eye is blue. Needless to say, he stands out in a crowd.

Hazlik wears the red, long-sleeved robes that are common to the Red Wizards of Thay. The collar is ruffled, but the robe is open in front, revealing his hairless, tattooed chest. He also wears a silver chain bearing a heavy, round, silver pendant adorned with a single, yellow gemstone.

Background: As a Red Wizard of Thay, Hazlik rose quickly through the social and magical ranks. Unfortunately for him, he managed to make some powerful enemies. His offenses were relatively minor, so his adversaries decided not to kill him. Instead, they humiliated him. They kidnapped Hazlik and tattooed his head and body with designs that only women wear.

Hazlik swore vengeance upon his enemies and devoted himself fully to his craft. (This was easy, because the tattooing left him a social outcast.) One night, Hazlik was searching the woods for an ingredient vital to his experiments. There, he came upon one of his rivals engaged in romantic pursuits. Catching them unawares, he slew his rival's lover and forced her to drink her sweetheart's blood. He then slew her as well. Mists rose from the ground as he left the scene of his brutal crime. As he walked onward, he found himself in the Nightmare Lands. Daunted by its alien nature, he quickly retreated into the Mists. For months he dwelled in the fog, nursing his hatred and making plans for his enemies in Thay. When the fog lifted, Ravenloft granted him the domain of Hazlan.

For decades, Hazlan was the most dangerous place a wizard could find himself. Wizards became symbols of his disgrace, so Hazlik wanted all magical arts wiped from his land. However, during the Grand Conjunction, Hazlik was briefly returned to Thay. There, he discovered that the children of those who had humiliated him were rising to power. For over thirty years he had been trying to obliterate the magical arts from his sight, while his enemies had been founding new dynasties in Thay. He began plotting against them, but before he could turn his plots to reality, he found himself back in Hazlan.

Current Sketch: Hazlik still hates wizards and their magic, but he has decided that sorcery is the only way he will ever gain his revenge. After more than thirty years of introspective hatred, he began taking on apprentices. His hope is that one day, one of his apprentices will return to Thay to wreak his revenge.

For all his grand plans, each night Hazlik still dreams of Thay and his humiliation at the hands of his enemies. In his dreams, he is always weak and cowardly, while they stride boldly across the Thayvian mountains. Thus, Hazlik dreads sleep and uses potions and philters to delay the inevitable. Thanks to this magic, he sleeps only once every few days.

Combat: Hazlik has all of the obvious abilities of a 12th-level invoker. In addition, he can detect the casting of any magical spell in Hazlan. He can also determine the location of the casting within ten miles, minus one mile for each level of the spell. For example, he would know a 3rd-level spell had been cast somewhere in a circle with a seven-mile radius.

If Hazlik is killed, his life force retreats into the yellow gemstone he wears, and only powerful magic can destroy this stone. Anyone who subsequently touches the gem must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or be compelled to wear the pendant. Once the pendant hangs around his neck, the character will defend it to the death (although nothing else prevents its removal). Each night, the wearer of the pendant dreams that he is battling Hazlik. If Hazlik wins this nightmarish struggle, the dreamer dies, and the evil lord invades the victim's corpse. Within a month, the body itself is slowly transformed to fit the description of Hazlik, and the evil wizard is completely reborn.

Spell List: 1st level - *alarm*, *burning hands*, *detect magic*, *enlarge*, *magic missile*, *message*, *phantasmal force*, *read magic*, *shield*, *unseen servant*.
2nd level - *alter self*, *continual light*, *detect invisibility*, *flaming sphere*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *web*, *wizard lock.*
3rd level - *fireball*, *fly*, *hold undead*, *item*, *lightning bolt*, *spectral force*, *wraithform*.
4th level - *dig*, *dimension door*, *fire trap*, *ice storm*, *phantasmal killer*, *polymorph other*, *stoneskin*, *wall of fire*. 5th level - *cloudkill*, *cone of cold*, *dream*, *magic jar*, *passwall*, *sending*, *wall offeree*.
6th level - *Bigby's forceful hand*, *chain lightning*, *contingency*.

Nova Vaasa

The Land: Nova Vaasa is a fairly large domain on the east side of the Core. Next to the Balinoks, the terrain is rocky and steep, but it quickly spreads eastward into a vast, grassy plateau dotted with occasional rock outcroppings. Aside from the trees along the rivers, woods are scarce, and nearly a quarter of the land is devoted to farming. The weather here is temperate year around, and farmers can harvest their wheat, oat, and rye crops three or four times a year. The soil is rocky, and fields cleared for farming are bordered by crude stone walls. Despite Nova Vaasa's relative youth as a Core domain, many of these walls appear ancient. Abandoned, roofless stone huts grouped in circles mark the habitats of forgotten families, and the tombs of a forgotten civilization are carved into the bluffs in the northern part of the domain.

Even newer buildings in Nova Vaasa are commonly made of stone. Nova Vaasan lumber often rots in just a few years; As a result, timber for construction is usually imported from other domains.

The city of Kantora lies near the center of the domain. It rivals Lekar in size, with sixteen thousand people, mostly peasants living in squalid conditions after being driven off their lands by exorbitant taxes. Egertus is about half that size, being home to nine thousand. Egertus has been the termination point for merchant caravans from Falkovnia and other nations further west. This cosmopolitan city is the center of education in Nova Vaasa and rivals Port-a-Lucine in culture. It is the location of some of the finest boarding schools, colleges, and medical institutions of the Core, including a Clinic for the Mentally Distressed. Although much of its staff - including medical pioneer Dr. Gregorian Illhousen - recently vanished mysteriously, the facility continues to be on the cutting edge of treating insanity and mental disorders. The smaller towns of Liara, Arbora, and Bergovitsa house about two thousand people each.

This domain is known mostly for its horses. The best mounts in Ravenloft come from Nova Vaasan bloodlines. Many of them run wild, particularly along the eastern ranges that spread out flat to the horizon in grassy plains. Commonly, herds of twenty to fifty black steeds thunder across the open range, spirited and free. Some claim that by night, herds of nightmares replace the mortal creatures of the day.

Cultural Level: Medieval, though Egertus is more chivalric due to outside influences.

The Folk: Nova Vaasans are sharply divided into a small aristocracy, impoverished masses, and a vague middle class, which consists of tax collectors, merchants, and clever thugs. The rich are very rich, while the poor are very poor and generally miserable. Vice and violence are rampant in the domain's large cities, and each town has an inordinate number of gambling houses and taverns.

The peasants and the working poor in the cities dress in plain, brown clothing that is usually heavily patched. The men wear loose shirts and cotton trousers, while the women wear blouses and divided skirt-pants, which allow comfortable riding for those wealthy enough to own a horse. Most peasants go barefoot, though a handful wear boots.

The nobles of the domain dress in elaborately colored costumes, a brilliant contrast to the clothes worn by the peasants. The men wear baggy pants tucked into shiny, black riding boots and shirt sleeves and collars trimmed with lace. The women dress in elaborate riding skirts made of velvet, soft cotton blouses trimmed with lace, and riding boots. Their hair is covered with beautiful scarves, trimmed with small gold coins and bells that jingle upon their forehead.

The men of Nova Vaasa, from peasant to noble, pride themselves on their mustaches, letting them grow long and bushy and waxing them into tight curls. A thick mustache is taken as a sign of maturity and virility.

The Law: The domain's aristocracy consists of five families. Four of these families (the Hiregaards, the Chekivs, the Rivtoffs, and the Vistins) live in castles on the grasslands and have the right to tax the peasants who live along the Dnar, Little Borchava, Volgis, and Ivlis rivers respectively. Each family pays tribute to the fifth family, the Bolshniks, who live in a castle in Kantora and control the Borchava River farmlands. Prince Othmar Bolshnik is the current political leader of the domain. There was a time when the noble families would each rule the domain for five years at a time. However, Othmar came to power twenty-two years ago and has taken several steps to insure that his family remains in power. He commands a sizable cavalry, consisting of 1st-level fighters equipped with ring mail and clubs. In addition, he has recruited dozens of lycanthrope mercenaries that serve as his special enforcement squads.

The other noble families pay their tribute to Othmar, though some grudgingly. The Hiregaards and Chekiv families support Othmar's rule; they feel that if Othmar did not have Bane's blessing, he would not be ruling. The Rivtoffs and Vistins are less pleased with Othmar and wish to return to the traditional rotation system. Neither family is strong enough to oppose Othmar and his forces, however.

Native Player Characters: Nova Vaasan heroes divide along the same lines as their countrymen. When a hero is created, the player must roll percentile dice. Any result of 89 or less means the character is from the lower class and receives half his normal starting allotment of gold. These characters are accustomed to poor accommodations, so they can always manage to find food, lodging, and clothing for half the price listed in the Player's Handbook. With a result between 90 and 95, the hero is a member of the domain's emerging middle class and receives normal starting funds. If the result is 96 or higher, the hero is a member of the aristocracy and receives five times normal starting money; further, the player must then choose which of the five ruling families his character belongs to. Characters from the upper class are required to purchase goods of extremely high quality. Thus, their weapons, armor, and miscellaneous equipment will always cost 50% more than listed in the Player's Handbook.

Heroes may be drawn from all classes permitted in the Ravenloft setting. The official religion of Nova Vaasa is the Church of Bane. The tenets are the same as the church in Hazlan (see the "Hazlan" entry), but the Nova Vaasan church has no schism. Although these priests also lost their spells during the Grand Conjunction, they uniformly believe that it was merely a side effect of the catastrophe, not due to Bane's disfavor. As such, they are also keenly interested in preventing any such event from occurring again. Nova Vaasan priests of Bane have major access to the spheres of all, combat, healing, necromantic, and sun and minor access to the spheres of numbers and wards.

All Nova Vaasan natives have an innate understanding of horses. This ability functions like the 1st-level priest spell animal friendship, except that the character must spend 1 d6 rounds attempting to convince the animal of his good intentions. Additionally, Nova Vaasan nobles receive the riding proficiency for free.

Personalities of Note: A beastly creature known as Malken plagues this land. He is known to stalk and brutalize young women and their husbands or lovers, but he always seems to escape town guardsmen undetected.

One of Nova Vaasa's most famous residents is a grim-faced warrior named Weathermay. He rides a black warhorse and is always clad entirely in black. He roams Nova Vaasa on a relentless quest against creatures of the night and other evildoers. He is to the common man what the famed scholar Rudolph van Richten was to scholars. His fame is not for his great insight into the nature of evil creatures, but instead for his talent at destroying them.

Encounters: On the plains of Nova Vaasa, the traveler is bound to see thundering herds of sleek black horses, perhaps as many as forty or fifty following the lead stallion. After dark, nightmares take their turn at running across the open expanses, and the very unlucky may find themselves faced with ten or twenty of the evil creatures.

Most other encounters are with bandits. The only serious predators are the plains cats. These black, tailless creatures live in the crevices of granite outcroppings and hunt on the plains by night. The females hunt in prides, dragging down horses and other sizeable mammals. The chance for an encounter is 25%, once during the day and twice during the night.

Further Reading: The game adventure The Awakening offers more details on Nova Vaasa and a look at some of the ancient ruins of the domain. The novel The Enemy Within focuses on the darklord of Nova Vaasa and his evil counterpart.

Darklord of Nova Vaasa

Sir Tristen Hiregaard/Malken
8th-Level Human Fighter,
Lawful Neutral/Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	2	Str	17
Movement	12	Dex	15
Level/ Hit Dice	8	Con	12
Hit Points	59	Int	13
THAC0	13	Wis	14
No. of Attacks	3/2 rounds	Cha	18 (3)
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Weapon specialization		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Sir Tristen Hiregaard is a tall, muscular man with dusky skin and gray-streaked black hair. He waxes the ends of his thick mustache into stiff points. His face is set in a stern expression, but compassion flickers in his dark eyes, He appears to be in his early sixties due to his dark hair; in fact, he is ninety years old. He remains as vital as men half his age, however.

Tristen dresses in loose, black trousers; tall, black riding boots; and a bright red shirt. The yellow scarf he wears around his neck is embroidered with red and black horses, and additional scarves with diagonal bands of red and black are folded and tied around his upper arms.

Background: Tristen Hiregaard was the first son of Romir Hiregaard, a princely knight of Vaasa. His father taught him the arts of riding, weaponry, and war, as well as the nobles' code, which proscribed strict rules for interactions between peasants and nobles - and between a noble and his prince.

Romir Hiregaard was an honest, fair ruler, but he had one fatal flaw. If he even imagined his young wife was unfaithful to him, he flew into an insane rage. One day he caught his wife in the arms of another man, and in a fit of passion, Romir killed them both. Only later did he learn that the man had innocently been teaching his wife how to waltz.

With her dying breath, Romir's wife cursed him. From that day on, he would kill any woman he fell in love with, or any man that crossed him. Unable to face up to his evil deed, Romir killed himself, and the curse was transferred to his son.

The curse did not manifest until Tristen first fell in love at the age of fifteen. The victim was a fair-haired peasant girl who worked as a servant in the family castle. The crime was quickly hushed up (for Tristen was the head of his noble household), but it left the young boy with deep emotional scars. He was by nature and training both honest and compassionate, yet he had enjoyed killing the girl, even though he felt great remorse about it later.

Six years and nine killings later - each of which gave him greater pleasure than the sensation of love - Tristen was pulled into Ravenloft. As he was drawn in by the dark powers, his personality split.

Sir Hiregaard is of lawful neutral alignment. His alter ego, known to the people of Nova Vaasa as Malken, is a chaotic evil killer who feeds upon Sir Hiregaard's secret jealousies and angers, savagely brutalizing the women Tristen loves and murdering the men who stand in the way of his desires.

Current Sketch: Sir Tristen Hiregaard is head of the Hiregaard family, which controls and exacts tribute from the farmlands along the Dnar River and the city of Liara. Unlike Nova Vaasa's other noble families, the Hiregaards treat their peasants with fairness and dignity. On occasion. Sir Hiregaard has even been known to show kindness, but he rarely has an opportunity to put his charitable impulses into practice. Bound by a strict set of rules that demand obedience to his ruler and his laws, he collects every coin of tax due. He is never brutal in his collection methods, but he is always very thorough. Further, he argues for lower taxes at every yearly Council of Lords, even though his arguments always fall on deaf ears. Some of his peasants revere him as their champion, while others despise him as much as they would any other overlord.

Even in his twilight years, Sir Hiregaard is very much the ladies' man, and many women - peasants and nobles alike - vie for his favors, for he showers them with expensive gifts. Still, others do their best to avoid his attention. After all, several of his past lovers have died mysterious, violent deaths, and even more have been left maimed and scarred beyond recognition.

Sir Hiregaard lives in Castle Faerhaaven with his sons Yorgi, Sasha, and Myar (all in their early fifties) and their wives and families. His wife of a forty-year, loveless marriage died three years ago when she gave birth to yet another son, Mikhail. The young boy is being raised by his older brothers, who dote upon him as one would expect old maids to do.

To all appearances, Sir Hiregaard is simply the head of a noble household that pays allegiance to Prince Othmar. Not even Hiregaard himself realizes that he is the darklord of the domain.

Whenever he begins to feel the stirrings of jealousy or anger, Sir Hiregaard orders his guards to lock him into his personal chambers, high in the master's tower of Castle Faerhaaven. There, sometimes for days on end, he waits until his passions have cooled. He believes that for seventy years he has controlled his lust for murder in this fashion and that he has made a new life for himself in Nova Vaasa, but he is wrong.

In fact Sir Hiregaard undergoes a hideous transformation when the rages strike. His hair becomes stark white, his frame gnarled and misshapen. His pockmarked face twists into a hideous leer, and his eyes burn with fury. He becomes the fiend Malken.

Malken is devilishly clever and frequently escapes his tower prison. He takes great care to return there before the rage subsides and Sir Hiregaard emerges. Recently, despite Malken's precautions, Tristen has begun to realize that perhaps his carefully laid strategy has been less than successful. Too many murders have coincided with his self confinement, and one of his guards has even admitted to entering the chamber early in violation of Tristen's orders and finding it curiously empty. Recognizing the clever nature of the beast within him, Tristen is seeking supernatural means to rid himself of this evil and quell his murderous passions.

Closing the Borders: The dual nature of Sir Hiregaard/Malken makes it impossible to seal the borders of the domain. Sir Hiregaard is struggling against the evil within himself, and in doing so, he robs his darker side of some of the powers enjoyed by most darklords.

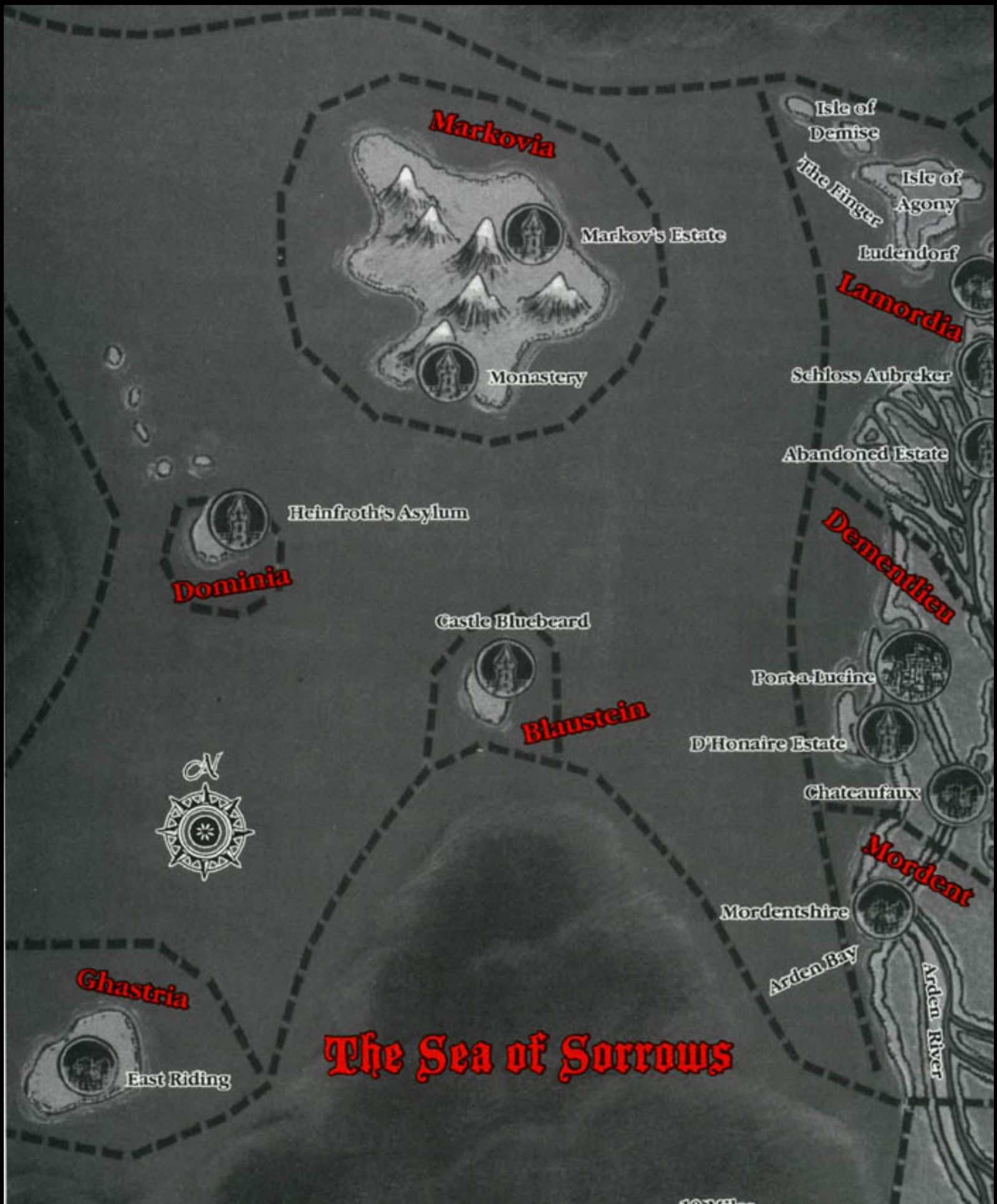
Combat: Sir Hiregaard is proficient in four weapons: the long sword, composite short bow, horseman's pick, and horseman's mace. Additionally, he is specialized in the mancatcher. When using this unusual weapon, he gets two attacks per round, gains a +1 bonus to his attack rolls, and adds a +2 bonus to his damage rolls (in addition to his normal Strength bonus). Malken shares these proficiencies, although he prefers to attack his victims (who are usually far weaker than he is) with his

bare hands.

Sir Hiregaard's long sword is a *defender* +4 with a hilt shaped like a silver horse's head. He also wears *chain mail* +2.

The Hiregaard family commands sixty foot soldiers (1st-level fighters) equipped with ring mail, short swords, and shields. He also commands twenty knights (3rd-level fighters), who fight on horseback with horseman's picks or maces and wear scale mail.

Should Sir Hiregaard ever be killed, his curse will attach itself to his oldest son, Yorgi. A new "Malken" will be born, and his first act will be the killing of Yorgi's wife. Should Yorgi die, the curse will be transferred to Sasha, then Myar, and-finally little Mikhail. Should all brothers be slain, the curse will transfer itself to Sasha's 25-year-old son.


Markovia
Isle of Demise
The Finger
Isle of Agony
Markov's Estate
Ludendorf
Lamordia
Monastery
Schloss Aubrecker
Abandoned Estate
Heinfroth's Asylum
Dementieu
Dominia
Castle Bluebeard
Port-a-Lucine
Blaustein
D'Honaire Estate
Chateaufaux
Mordent
Mordentshire
Arden Bay
Arden River
Ghastria
The Sea of Sorrows
East Riding


10 Miles

The Western Sea

This section contains information on the Sea of Sorrows and some of its major islands, including Markovia.

The Sea of Sorrows

The Land: The Sea of Sorrows is a mist-haunted body of water to the west of the Core. These dark waves are traveled by Captain Pieter van Riese in the ghost ship *Relentless*.

The waters of the Sea of Sorrows are bitter, stormy, and cold. Dense fogs constantly shroud the surface, and terrifying nor'westers can materialize without warning. It is a rare day when a lockout can see more than a mile ahead of the ship, and none can truthfully say that they have seen the sun or stars while sailing on this haunted body of water.

The fogs of the Sea are extraordinarily thick and clammy. When a ship sails into a fog bank, time seems to stop. An unnerving silence sets in as the Mist deadens all sound and chills voyagers to the bone. Visibility is reduced to a few yards, forcing all sailing vessels to drift helplessly at the mercy of the winds and currents.

Efforts by mariners and explorers to chart the Sea of Sorrows are hampered by the fact that most of the sea is hidden by eternal fog banks. No two captains have been able to chart a consistent course to the lands that are rumored to exist there. One captain who holds a course through the Mists will reach the island of Dominia, while another (or even the same captain) will find himself running aground on the barren shores of Bluetspur when trying to plot the same course. (Note: This is because the Sea of Sorrows actually gives way to the Misty Border.)

The Sea of Sorrows is one of the Demiplane's largest domains. It is so large, in fact, that at least six other darklords have domains within it.

A few scattered islands lie hidden in the Mists of the Sea of Sorrows. Few landings have been recorded on any of these isles, and it is extremely unusual to encounter the same island twice, no matter how long one searches. Most seafarers keep the coasts of the Core in sight when sailing this sea.

Cultural Level: Varies by island or ship encountered.

The Folk: The Sea of Sorrows itself has no native human inhabitants, but mariners from Lamordia, Necropolis, Dementlieu, and Mordent often brave its dangerous waters. Fishermen, sealers, and traders ply the sea between those realms in small numbers. Martira Bay is home to a shipyard that builds some of the finest vessels of the Core, while Port-a-Lucine, Ludendorf, and Mordentshire serve as major ports.

Many of the scattered islands in the ocean are inhabited, however. The most prominent of those (except for Markovia, which is described later) include the following:

> *Blaustein* - This small island is ruled by the iron fist of a madman. Known as Bluebeard, this handsome, graybearded fiend dwells in a castle perched over the island's single village like a vicious guard dog. Those ships that have landed here have been either chased off by club-wielding villagers or have been commanded to appear before Bluebeard. The villagers are fanatically loyal to their lord, although the gallows on the edge of town always have at least one fresh corpse swinging on them. Strangely enough, the citizens of the village

do not seem to recall that the executed person was once one of their neighbors.

One visit to Blaustein is generally all any crew needs before deciding never to go back.

Cultural Level: Early medieval.

The Darklord: Bluebeard.

Further Reading: For more information on Bluebeard and his island, see the Darklords accessory.

Demise - One of two sizable island in the Lamordian island chain called the Finger, Demise is home to a tragic creature known as Althea. This medusa is trapped within the confines of an extensive labyrinth made from white stone, and she has been driven insane by loneliness.

The Darklord: Althea.

Further Reading: Althea and Demise are described in the Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II.

Dominia - Dr. Daclaud Heinfroth's Asylum for the Mentally Disturbed is the only settlement on this tiny island, which is located about fifty miles west-south-west of Markovia. Originally from Gundarak, Dr. Heinfroth is recognized as Ravenloft's leading expert on mental disorders.

The Darklord: Dr. Daclaud Heinfroth (also known as Dr. Dominiani).

Further Reading: For full details on the asylum and the horrible experiments Dr. Heinfroth performs on his patients, see the boxed campaign Bleak House.

Ghastria - The island of Ghastria is home only to the village of East Riding. The settlement lies four miles inland along a well-marked road that leads from a natural harbor. Roughly six hundred people live here, and they are all the tenants of Marquis Stezen D'Polarno, whom merchants say rules the island with a benevolent hand.

Crops on Ghastria grow healthy and plentiful, but ships who carry victuals and foodstuffs to the island will find eager customers. Those who have spent any length of time on Ghastria understand why: Although the produce and meat here appears wholesome and smells delectable when prepared, it is, in fact, utterly tasteless. Only food imported from the mainland has any flavor.

The Darklord: Stezen D'Polarno.

Further Reading: For more information on East Riding and Stezen D'Polarno, see the Darklords accessory.

Isle of Agony - The second of two sizable islands in the Lamordian island chain is reportedly home to either a man-eating sea monster or the devil himself. Though it is the location of one of the few dimensional gates that will allow heroes to travel beyond the boundaries of the Demiplane, no one with any sense lands upon this island willingly.

The Darklord: Adam (as this island is actually part of the domain of Lamordia).

Further Reading: The Isle of Agony is described in the adventure *Adam's Wrath*.

Native Player Characters: No locations in the Sea of Sorrows lend themselves to the creation of player characters. Still, a hero can easily be from one of the mainland port towns in Mordent, Dementlieu, or Lamordia.

Personalities of Note: Each inhabited island features its own cast of chilling characters.

Encounters: Native creatures of the Sea of Sorrows are scarce. Seals, whales, and schools of cold-water fish are hunted by daring captains. The mariners of the coastal domains have an unwritten code of nonaggression on the sea; all seafarers are brothers in the face of such a treacherous and changeable ocean.

The Sea of Sorrows has several monstrous denizens. Among these are bowlyns, reavers, and sea spawn, all of which are detailed in the three RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices. The most terrifying encounter, however, is a sighting of the Relentless, the ghost ship of Captain Pieter van Riese. It is said that any ship unfortunate enough to meet the Relentless will never again return to port.

Darklord of the Sea of Sorrows



Captain Pieter van Riese
Fifth-Magnitude Ghost, Neutral Evil
Lawful Neutral/Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	-5/0*	Str	17
Movement	12	Dex	15
Level/ Hit Dice	14	Con	17
Hit Points	62	Int	14
THAC0	7	Wis	9
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	16
Damage/ Attack	1d12 and drains 3 levels		
Special Attacks	Ghostly abilities		
Special Defences	+4/+2* magical weapon or better to hit		
Magic Resistance	50%		

* The first number applies when Van Riese is ethereal and his opponent is not; the second number applies when either Van Riese is corporeal or his opponent becomes ethereal.

Pieter van Riese is a powerful apparition who sails the Sea of Sorrows in his spectral ship, the Relentless. He and his ship appear much as they did in life, though they are now translucent wraiths.

Captain van Riese is a tall, broad-shouldered man with a strong jaw, a close-cropped beard of iron gray, and deepset eyes that smolder like coals. He wears a dark, high-collared bridge coat and a battered sealskin cap.

Relentless is a square-rigged brigantine that always appears to be in full sail, regardless of the actual wind conditions. She carries no crew save her captain, who paces the quarterdeck like a caged animal. Van Riese is capable of willing the *Relentless* into a corporeal state, and when she is solid, she cannot be distinguished from an ordinary vessel.

Background: For almost all of his life, Pieter van Riese sailed the seas of his home world. He stowed away on his first voyage and worked his way up from cabin boy to boatswain's mate. After many years, Van Riese saved enough money to become master of his own ship.

Van Riese had a dream of finding a northern passage from the seas of his home to the exotic, treasure-laden isles of the east, so he searched the arctic waters endlesssly supporting his expeditions with whaling and sealing. Time and time again, he was defeated by the icy seas and treacherous fogs.

Gradually, Van Riese's dream became an obsession. The wealth and fame he would gain in finding a passage meani nothing to him; it became a personal battle against the northern seas. Van Riese drove his crews mercilessly, believing that their weaknesses kept him from reaching his goal.

In his final voyage, Van Riese struggled for more than two months to round the ice-bound northern islands. *Relentless* was battered savagely by howling gales and mountainous seas. The crew begged their captain to turn back, but Van Riese could not be swayed. He executed the crew's spokesmen and continued his war against the sea.

At the height of the gale, the Relentless herself was finally defeated. Her foremast was lost, and she began taking on water. Captain van Riese's rage was awful. In the moment of his defeat, he promised his life and those of his crew to any being who could help him force the passage. His offer was accepted.

The gale abated, the ship righted herself, and Captain van Riese found himself sailing in the fog-shrouded waters he thought he had sought for so long. However, his crew was gone, and his beloved *Relentless* had become a spectral apparition.

Current Sketch: Van Riese now sails the Sea of Sorrows, charting the islands he finds there. He wishes to return to his homeworld eventually and prove that the passage he sought for so long is indeed traversable. The mere sight of the *Relentless* is considered a dire omen for seafarers on the Sea of Sorrows.

Captain van Riese is growing increasingly frustrated, however. It seems that the islands of the Sea of Sorrows keep moving, so his charts are never accurate. The Mists confound him at every turn. He crosses and recrosses the sea, double-checking his charts, forever making corrections.

Captain van Riese believes it is his crew that keeps failing him and that a new crew will enable him to finally escape. He searches for courageous and skillful mariners, luring them aboard the *Relentless* with promises of far ports and great riches. Those who listen to him vanish when the *Relentless* resumes her ghostly state, and those who refuse Van Riese's offer provoke his inhuman wrath.

Closing the Borders: Pieter van Riese can close the borders of his domain by causing an impenetrable fog to arise, becalming any vessel trying to leave. Flyers sink slowly into the rough, shark-infested waters.

Combat: Captain Pieter van Riese has a number of unusual powers. His touch does not age his victims, but instead drains life energy (experience levels) from them and causes 1d12 points of chilling damage. Van Riese is also able to dominate any living person who meets his gaze.

The sight of the *Relentless* forces living characters to make a successful saving throw vs. spell or be paralyzed with fear for as long as she remains in sight. Van Riese can also create fog clouds, shadow monsters, solid fog, or walls of fog at will within five hundred yards of the Relentless. In addition, he can summon 2d4 bowlyns to aid him.

Van Riese's weakness is his bond with the *Relentless*. Should the vessel ever be destroyed, Van Riese would be destroyed as well. Of course, it is not easy to sink a ghost ship.

Note: The islands in the Sea of Sorrows are domains of other darklords. Van Riese has no control over those territories since he cannot set foot on land.

Markovia

The Land: Although most scholars of the Core reject the idea as foolish, some claim that this, the largest known island in the Sea of Sorrows, was once located at the center of the Core where the Shadow Rift now exists. Discovered fifty-five miles due west of Ludendorf by a lost merchant vessel eight years ago, a growing number of map-makers are labeling it Markovia, despite the unlikelihood of it actually being that land.

Markovia is a lush, yet apparently uninhabited island. Two years ago, an attempt was made by Lamordians to settle it, but the colonists vanished mysteriously.

Cultural Level: Stone age, though Markov and his home are medieval.

The Folk: Except for the beast men created by Markov, this domain is uninhabited. Lord Markov believes visitors are gifts from the dark powers - more raw parts for his abominable creations. He attempts to capture any who enter his domain and transform them into beast men. Since he uses no anesthesia, this operation is often painful enough to drive the victim mad. Still, the beast men obey Markov's commands without question.

The simplest creatures in Markovia are animals who have acquired human qualities. Others are humans who have acquired bestial attributes. These beast men have formed a hunter/gatherer type of society. They worship Markov as a god, and he encourages this practice.

The Law: Frantisek Markov rules this domain unopposed. The inhabitants of this domain obey him mostly out of fear, but that is fine with him.

Native Player Characters: There are no native player characters from Markovia.

Personalities of Note: Markov the beast lord is the darklord of this domain. The beast men call him "Diosamblet", or "the god who walks among us". The Vistani call him "Master of Pain".

Encounters: Characters in Markovia have a 50% chance of an encounter, once per day and once per night. Most encounters involve beast men. They have standing orders to bring all intruders to Markov's estate, but they do not even approach the Vistani. The beast men resort to violence only if peaceful invitations and coercion are ineffective.

Further Reading: For details on Markovia, see the adventure *Neither Man nor Beast*.

Darklord of Markovia

Frantisek Markov
0-Level Human, Lawful Evil



Armor Class	6*	Str	19*
Movement	12*	Dex	18*
Level/ Hit Dice	5*	Con	16*
Hit Points	24	Int	17
THAC0	15*	Wis	9
No. of Attacks	2*	Cha	8
Damage/ Attack	1d4/1d4		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	See below		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

* Variable score

Frantisek is a large man, with thick bones, broad features, green eyes, and straight, black hair that he wears slicked back on his head. His broad, toothy smile is far from reassuring, often appearing threatening and predatory. He wears a heavy, high-necked robe, which he sometimes adorns with a necklace of animal or human teeth. He appears massive and lumbering, with a slightly hunched back, unusually long arms, and visibly bowed legs.

Background: The Markovs lived in Barovia when Strahd became a vampire. Some of them died in Castle Ravenloft, but the others Red to nearby Vallaki. Frantisek grew up on a small pig farm outside that village, surrounded lay the forested slopes of Barovia.

Frantisek eventually married a young woman from the village and opened a butcher shop there. Soon, however, he tired of simple butchery. He began to experiment with the animals, performing surgical amputations, grafts, and glandular injections. Of course, they all died within a few days, but the hobby cost him nothing since he could still sell the meat.

When his kind-hearted wife, Ludmilla, discovered his ghastly pastime, she was revolted and threatened to leave him and tell the villagers about the meat they were buying. Furious at her betrayal, Frantisek made her his next experiment. Ludmilla lived for three days. When her body was first discovered, the villagers thought it was the body of a beast. When the truth came out, they exiled Frantisek to the Mists, and he became the darklord of Markovia.

Current Sketch: Markov has the power to operate on any creature and combine it with the aspects of any other species. Most of his experiments have created broken ones (see the Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II).

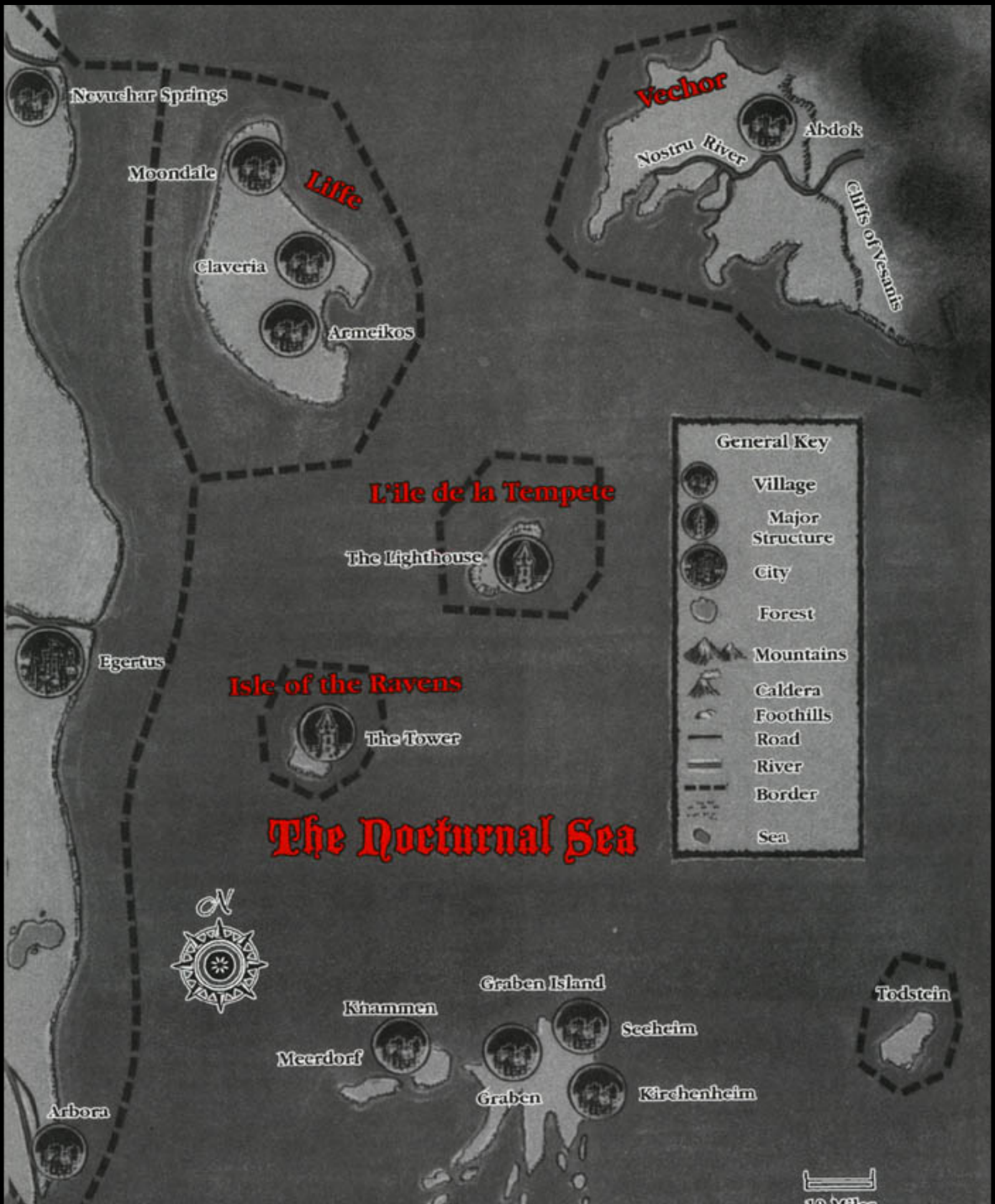
Markov has been cursed by the land to have the body of a beast. Markov desperately wants to be a normal human again. He spends long hours in his lab vivisecting animals and transforming them into animal men, hoping to discover a means to untangle his twisted genes. Since Markovia was transported into the Sea of Sorrows during the Grand Conjunction, test subjects have been in short supply. He still continues to experiment, hoping to find the means of curing his condition, but he is forever doomed to failure.

Closing the Borders: When Markov wants to seal Markovia, the seas rise and tumble in violent bursts against the shores, and sharks circle in the waters, seeking the objects of Markov's wrath. It is still possible to enter and leave Markovia through the

Mists during these times, but they usually do not rise.

Combat: Markov is a shapechanger who can assume any animal form. The transformation requires a full round, but he can do it at will. Each change also heals 2d6 points of accumulated damage. He takes on the physical characteristics of the animal he resembles, including Hit Dice, Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, but his mental attributes remain the same.

The dark powers have imposed some interesting restrictions on Markov. He cannot assume a true human form, nor can he take the shape of any humanoid creature. He can only assume the form of a normal animal, not a magical or enchanted creature. No matter which animal he becomes, however, Frantisek always retains his own human head and face. Among other things, this means that he never gains a biting attack. He can choose whether to retain his own hands or assume the paws of the animal he becomes. Usually, Frantisek chooses the form of a gorilla because he can still appear human, though bulky and lumbering, beneath his loose robes. The numbers above reflect his abilities as an ape.


Nevuchar Springs
Moondale
Liffe
Claveria
Armeikos
Vechor
Abdok
Nostru River
Cliffs of Vesanis
L'ile de la Tempete
The Lighthouse
Egertus
Isle of the Ravens
The Tower
The Nocturnal Sea
General Key
Village
Major Structure
City
Forest
Mountains
Caldera
Foothills
Road
River
Border
Sea
N
Graben Island
Todstein
Khammen
Seeheim
Meerdorf
Graben
Kirchenheim
Arbora



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The Eastern Sea

This section contains information on the Nocturnal Sea, some of its major islands, and Vechor.

The Noctural Sea

The Land: The Nocturnal Sea is a frigid body of water east of Nova Vaasa and Necropolis. Until three years ago, it was completely hidden by the Mists that surround the Core, although daring ships had been setting out from Egertus since shortly after the Grand Conjunction. Still, even before the Mists retreated, several islands were discovered, and new islands are actually being discovered in the Nocturnal Sea continually.

Although the Nocturnal Sea is no longer hidden, it is still hazardous to navigate. Perpetual cloud cover hangs over the dark, choppy waters; no sun, moon, or stars ever penetrates these clouds - although some of the islands enjoy sunny days. At night, the sea is plunged into an inky blackness that seems to dull the infravision of the demihuman races. Sailing the Nocturnal Sea is even more dangerous than the Sea of Sorrows. The clouds make navigation all but impossible for ships that do not carry magnetic compasses, and banks of fog rise from the cold waters almost without warning, completely engulfing vessels and causing them to lose their way. Further, jagged rocks hide beneath the waves near virtually every island, and sometimes in what appears to be open water. The skeletons of great ships mark the locations of some of these hazards while others remain undiscovered.

Nonetheless, the lands in the Nocturnal Sea have all proven either interesting or profitable enough to spur both the adventuresome and greedy to keep looking for new lands across the sea and in the Mists. Some explorers believe they have found the eastern shores of the Nocturnal Sea with the domain of Vechor, but others maintain that Vechor is just another large island. Others claim that the sea has no boundaries, and that if a brave sea captain plots a straight course east into the Mists, he will eventually emerge in the Sea of Sorrows. However, no captain who plies the Nocturnal Sea is known to have attempted this, and certainly no one is known to have succeeded. Most consider the idea wishful thinking on the part of the merchants in Martira Bay and along the Core's west coast, since more islands with inhabitants willing and eager to trade have been discovered in the Nocturnal Sea in a few short years than have been discovered in the Sea of Sorrows for a century.

Among the most noteworthy islands discovered so far in the Nocturnal Sea are the following:

> *Graben Island* - Located about seventy-five miles off the coast of Arbora, Graben is the second largest island in the Sea of Sorrows. It is home to four villages and ruled by a family of nobles who share their name with the isle. The largest village on the island is the village of Graben, which boasts about one thousand people. The other settlements are home to roughly three hundred each.
>
> The people of Graben are an insular lot, so no steady trade has been established.
>
> Further Reading: For details on Graben Island, see the adventure module Ship of Horror.
>
> *Isle of the Ravens* - Before this island comes into sight, its primary inhabitants make themselves known to approaching ships: Large ravens swoop around the ship and perch upon the riggings and in portholes, seemingly studying the ship's crew and passengers with eyes that glitter with intelligence. When the island comes into view, crews see a heavily forested island thal roughly covers one square mile. At its center is a tall

tower reaching into the cloud cover, around which hundreds of large ravens swirl like black clouds.

Cultural Level: Unknown.

The Darklord: Though her name is not known, the isle's darklord is reputed to be a mage of some skill and is the island's only known human inhabitant. This petite woman with pale skin and straight black hair lives in the tower at the center of the island. Reportedly, a group of sailors landed on her island, and when they tried to take advantage of her hospitality, she transformed all but one into ravens. The sailors took flight and joined the circling birds overhead, while the remaining one fled to tell the world of the dangerous woman on the Isle of the Ravens,

Knammen - Immediately west of Graben, this island contains the small fishing village of Meerdorf.

Further Reading: For more information, see the adventure module *Ship of Horror*.

L'ile de la Tempete - This ten-mile long, kidneyshaped island is one of the most dangerous locations in the Nocturnal Sea. It is surrounded by some of the most treacherous shoals so far discovered. However, a large lighthouse stands at its center. The lighthouse beam does not sweep across the waves as a normal lighthouse would, but is instead constant, so captains who do not realize what it is will still ground their ships on the jagged rocks just below the surface.

The Darklord: The island is in fact home to Captain Alain Monette, a werebat. Once a cruel sea-captain, he is now the darklord of this tiny island, cursed to never sail his beloved sea again.

Further Reading: For details on Captain Monette, see the *Darklords* accessory.

Liffe - This large island contains several cattle farms, rolling fields - although the corn grows sickly here, due to the scarcity of sunlight - and three settlements: Armeikos, which is home to three thousand people; Moondale, home to one thousand people; and the small village of Claveria (located on the estate of Baron Evensong), home to four hundred people. Between these three settlements and the island's farms, Liffe is completely self-sufficient.

The people who live here are fishermen, farmers, and artisans. These commoners serve a small nobility, which is gradually being replaced by a middle class that has cropped up due to trade with Nova Vaasa. In their thirst for exotic items from beyond the dark waters, the nobles are creating the class that will some day replace them.

The deep-water harbor of Armeikos, as well as the shipyards there, are making Liffe a frequently visited island, despite something of a language barrier. It seems the tongue spoken by the people of Liffe is closely related to the language known by the elves of Sithicus.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Darklord: Baron Evensong.

Further Reading: The game accessory *Book of Crypts* features adventures set in Armeikos, Claveria, and Moondale.

The Nightmare Lands - In addition to the islands mentioned above, rumor has it that somewhere within the Nocturnal Sea is a place known as the Nightmare Lands. This island reportedly is a point where dreams and

reality intersect. So far, no mariner has been able to navigate to it, although Captain Onid Rhelarian claimed to have sailed the famed scholar Rudolph van Richten and Dr. Gregorian Illhousen to that place some time ago. (See Chapter Four for details on this domain.)

Todstein - Located sixty miles east of Graben, Todstein is forever surrounded by icy storms, and no one is known to ever have safely landed there. It appears to be little more than an ice-coated rocky knoll. This is the island upon which the new lord of the Nocturnal Sea dwells, Meredoth the Necromancer.

Further Reading: For more information, see the adventure module *Ship of Horror*.

Native Player Characters: There are no native player characters from the Nocturnal Sea, though they can be from individual islands.

Encounters: There are several monstrous denizens of the Nocturnal Sea. Among these are bowlyns, reavers, and sea spawn, all of which are detailed in the first three RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices. Other encounters vary by island.

Further Reading: The darklord of the Nocturnal Sea, Meredoth, is detailed in the adventure module *Ship of Horro*r.

Darklord of the Noctural Sea

Meredoth
20th-Level Human Necromancer,
Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	-2	Str	10
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/ Hit Dice	20	Con	15
Hit Points	50	Int	19
THAC0	14	Wis	12
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	5
Damage/ Attack	By spell or weapon		
Special Attacks	Spells (6/6/6/6/6/5/4/4/3)		
Special Defences	Immune to attacks from undead		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Meredoth is a wizened old mage who stands just over six feet tall. He has piercing, cloud blue eyes, and flowing, frosty-white hair, beard, and mustache. His skin is pale and always cold to the touch. His long fingers end in twisted, dawlike nails that have a purplish tint, like that of a corpse. He typically wears black or purple woolen robes.

Background: Meredoth lived on the world of Mystara (from the MYSTARA campaign setting). There, he was granted a barony in the Alphatian province of Norwold.

Meredoth was not much of a ruler. He accepted the land grant because he knew Norwold was a wild and untamed land and assumed that he would be able to work on his spell



research undisturbed. He settled on an island off the coast of his territory and ordered his retainers to deal with establishing suitable colonies for Alphatian immigrants.

The first winter in Norwold was harsh, and Meredoth lost many of his retainers. However, it was a small matter to simply animate them and use them for menial tasks such as clear-cutting. Meredoth's chief retainer, however, objected to this, so the mage killed him as well.

As an increasing number of his retainers and the immigrants arriving from Alphatia sought audiences with the baron, Meredoth found less and less time for his magical studies. He knew he could not kill everyone, so he devoted time to their petty concerns. However, what time remained for his research was devoted to a way to improve both retainers and colonists so that they would not constantly bother him with such concerns as defense of the settlements and food shortages.

In the dead of winter, two years after Meredoth had been made a baron of Norwold, he discovered the solution. It could not have come at a more opportune time, because the colonists were all on the verge of dying from starvation. He poisoned them all and made them into unique zombies that retained their former intellect while making them slavishly loyal to their master. The colony would continue to exist, but there was no need for food, and no one would ever bother Meredoth again. That same night, however, a violent storm raged. When it cleared, Meredoth found that his island sanctuary was no longer off the coast of Norwold. Instead, it had become part of the Demiplane of Dread.

Meredoth did some exploring and found that his island existed in a body of water with a handful of other islands. Mists surrounded it all, and those Mists prevented any escape. However, there were people living on nearby islands that would serve nicely as test subjects for his necromantic magic. After a century in the Mists, Meredoth was finally rewarded with rulership of the Nocturnal Sea.

Current Sketch: Meredoth has not yet realized that he can now draw test subjects from the many islands of the Nocturnal Sea - and even the Core. His attention remains focused on the islands of Todstein (which is an exact duplicate of his island home on Mystara, although it is forever locked in severe winter weather), Qraben, and Knammen. He has turned the noble family of Qraben into undead, and they are presently his primary minions. Meredoth has come to view life as an enormous experiment, and the living as experiments waiting to happen. He has no regard for the value of life, and considers humans to be nothing more than crops waiting to be harvested. His undead minions aid in this harvest, by abducting merchants who spend any time on Graben, and his own island of Todstein is riddled with a variety of traps set to catch those who manage to land there.

Closing the Borders: Meredoth can generate such turbulence around the islands of the Nocturnal Sea and along the eastern coast of the Core that the water becomes impassible. Fifty-foot-high waves and mile-wide whirlpools ensure that those within do not escape with their lives.

Combat: Meredoth has the spellcasting abilities of a 20th-level necromancer. He is immune to attacks from and effects of undead of five or fewer Hit Dice.

If Meredoth's home or island is infiltrated, he considers it to be an "extermination problem". His traps are constructed to secure potential experimentation subjects. He typically arrives at a trap to ensure that it is sprung, then retreats to another part of his home.

Meredoth is loath to enter melee. Although ruthless in battle, he maintains a safe distance as long as possible, casting spells at maximum range. He always casts protective spells upon himself before combat begins (unless the urgency of the situation prohibits such precautions).

The necromancer has a variety of magical items that he will have with him at all times, and most of these are potent in combat. These items include the following: *cloak of protection* +3, *bracers of defense* AC4, *ring of shooting stars*, *rod of smiting* (11 charges), *staff of the serpent (python)*, *wand of flame extinguishing* (16 charges), *bag of holding*, *broom of flying*, and a *decanter of endless water*. Meredoth's homeworld of Mystara is a very magic-rich world, so when he entered Ravenloft, his spell books contained every spell in the *Player's Handbook*. Ravenloft has granted him the power to know and cast any spell that was once in his spell books, which were not transported with him when he was seized by the Mists, up to his daily limit of spells. He need not spend time memorizing spells each day, but may instead cast these spells whenever they are needed.

Note: Many of the islands in the Nocturnal Sea are domains of other darklords. Meredoth has no control over those territories. However, any island without an independent darklord is part of his domain.

Vechor

The Land: Until recently, Vechor was surrounded by the Mists, completely cut off from the rest of the Demiplane. Now, it is the only domain thus far to be discovered east of the Nocturnal Sea.

In Vechor, the marshy coastline gives way to a forested domain where the weather has thus far been consistently muggy, although the locals claim the weather changes at the whim of their ruler, King Easan. Almost any physical activity immediately results in a drenching sweat, and unless adventurers are careful to drink lots of water, they will soon find themselves suffering from dehydration and heat stroke.

The Nostru River winds its way lazily from the Cliffs of Vesanis in the east to the sea in the west. For the most part, this river is infested with large, aggressive mosquitoes that force those traveling along its shores to cover themselves completely. Luckily, the mosquitoes do not come near the city of Abdok, capital to King Easan and the only settlement known thus far in this domain.

Abdok is a study in contrasts. The people are well-fed and happy, yet the city is a ramshackle maze of buildings seemingly on the verge of collapse and narrow streets littered with refuse. Easan's dwelling, by contrast, is a sprawling structure of white and pink marble at the city's heart, its oddly twisted spires sparkling in the sun.

The southern border of Vechor is marked by the Cliffs of Vesanis. The head of the Nostru River is somewhere beyond the cliffs, although no one in recent memory has scaled the cliffs and returned to tell of their findings.

The drastically changing weather patterns seem normal next to some of the strange occurrences Vechorites must deal with. Several times a year, the trees of the forest rearrange themselves, causing loggers to get lost and forcing local rangers to rescue them. The dead frequently leave their graves to join in wedding celebrations. The walls around Abdok often turn to flesh, remaining so until the stench of the decaying meat becomes unbearable, at which point they revert back to stone. The sky changes color several times a week, and the moon and sun randomly change size. Virtually everything in the domain is fluid - all caused by King Easan the Mad, ruler of Vechor.

Cultural Level: Classical.

The Folk: The people of Vechor are olive-skinned, with hair color ranging from honey-blonde to black. Eye colors range from a startling silver and gold to more common shades of green or blue. They either keep their hair short or wear it in neat braids. The favored clothing style for both men and women is a belted tunic that leaves the right shoulder and part of the chest bare and a skirt that ends just below the mid-thigh. Sandals are the most common footwear. Though cloaks are worn only occasionally, they are virtually always kept near at hand, since the weather often shifts with no warning. Also, inhabitants of Vechor all bear the brand of an "E" on their foreheads, in honor of their king.

Vechorites ply a variety of trades and crafts, and harvest the natural resources of the domain. Virtually any item that is appropriate to the domain's cultural level can be purchased in Abdok for half the listed price in the Player's Handbook. Increased trade with Necropolis and Nova Vaasa may change that, however.

Vechorites are aware that their land is tied intimately to their ruler and his whims. They acknowledge him as a god, although their worship is one of the few things he has never demanded. They are also aware that he is hopelessly insane, so they just go about their lives, taking the weirdness in stride. The chaotic nature of life here has resulted in the extinction of many of the social restrictions one finds elsewhere. Nonetheless, marriages are still considered sacred and permanent.

Native Player Characters: Any classes and races allowed in Ravenloft and appropriate to a classical cultural level can be found here, with one important exception. The only form of wizard magic allowed by law in Vechor is wild magic. All other kinds of mages are to be hunted and killed, by order of King Easan. While players may choose to create wizards other than wild mages, they must practice extreme caution.

Due to the frequent shifts in reality in Vechor, characters from this realm receive a -1 penalty when attempting to disbelieve illusions. They are familiar with strangeness and are prone to accept it. Additionally, every character from this realm bears the Mark of Easan, a rune branded onto the forehead of all Vechorite infants (the equivalent of "E" in their written language).

Personalities of Note: Ahmi Vanjuko, a ranger who was transformed into a mechanical golem by one of Easan's twisted whims dwells near the Cliffs of Vesanis. He burns with desire for revenge against Easan.

The Law: King Easan the Mad (also known as Easan the Eternal) is the absolute ruler of this domain. He reportedly dwells in the spired palace at the heart of Abdok, but he is rarely seen. Other rumors hold he spends most of his time in a mansion beyond the Cliffs of Vesanis. His only official law forbids the practice of all but wild magic within his domain.

There is no organized militia or police force in the domain. When needed, the young men of Abdok unite in defense of the town or to hunt down violent criminals. The Vechorite justice system is simple mob rule. The one exception to this seems to be those who dare speak out against Easan. Despite the fact that he has no obvious police force or military, anyone who speaks of rebellion vanishes in short order. No one knows what happens to them, and no one knows how they vanish.

Encounters: Anything may be encountered in Vechor, and all manner of strange events may occur. It all depends on Easan.

Further Reading: Ahmi Vanjuko and part of Easan's history is described in the RAVENLOFT monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II.

Darklord of Vechor

Easan the Mad
12th-Level Wood Elf Wild Mage,
Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	6	Str	8
Movement	12	Dex	18
Level/ Hit Dice	10+2	Con	9
Hit Points	50	Int	17 (6)*
THAC0	11 (8)*	Wis	10 (4)*
No. of Attacks	2*	Cha	7
Damage/ Attack	1d3/1d3 or by weapon		
Special Attacks	Spells (5/5/5/5/5/2)		
Special Defences	Immortal		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

* The parenthetical statistics are for the fiend that inhabits Easan's body.

Easan is short, even for an elf. He stands just over four feet in height and weighs just over ninety pounds. He has fine, pointed features and the olive skin and dark hair that mark him a wood elf. His eyes are dark, glittering with sinister delight. His voice is soft and melodic, although he rarely speaks more than two consecutive sentences that make sense together.

Easan's clothing varies. Sometimes he appears dressed as a wilderness runner, sometimes he wears a black toga and a wreath of withered laurel leaves, and yet other times he wears a white laboratory smock stained with blood and unidentifiable substances. Background: Easan is originally from the world known as Oerth. He was a wizard of some skill in a small elven kingdom on the borders of an evil kingdom known as the Land of Iuz.

Easan was constantly arguing in favor of arming for war against luz. It was his belief that luz's forces would try to absorb the kingdom sooner or later and that it was important for the wood elves to be able to defend themselves. Eventually, his arguments convinced his fellow elves, and they began to prepare for war.

Iuz, the demigod who ruled the nearby nation, would not tolerate this hostile act by the elves. He sent forth fiendish minions to abduct Easan and bring him to his capitol, the City of Skulls. luz made accusations of warmongering against Easan, who claimed that luz could not possibly understand Easan's mind - or that of any other wood elf. luz agreed with the elf and decided that he needed to learn. In order to do so, he placed the spirit of a fiend (telepathically linked to his own mind) within Easan. The two beings shared the same body and constantly overlapped in thought and outlook. Easan, unable to distinguish his own mind clearly from the fiend's, soon began to go insane.

In his more lucid moments, Easan searched for arcane ways to eject the fiend from his mind, but all efforts failed. Not even the priests of St. Cuthbert, the eternal enemy of luz, could help the elf. The mystics of a land known as Vechor managed to keep the fiendish intellect dormant within Easan's body for several decades. Unfortunately, a strange cataclysm destroyed these mystics and their island home. Easan was the only survivor.

Easan, driven hopelessly insane by the sudden return of the fiend, decided to rid his mind of the beast through scientific means. He built a house far away from all civilization. (The fiendish being dictated the appearance of the house, while the

elf part of Easan constructed a living barrier of nasty brambles around it.) There, he engaged in experiments to determine the nature of spirits. Any living creatures he could find became his test subjects. Eventually, the dark powers pulled Easan into Ravenloft.

Months went by before Easan realized anything had changed. When he did, both he and his fiendish side discovered they were in a foreign land where the people worshipped him as a god. Their physical characteristics and clothing reminded him of the mystics, so he named the domain Vechor. In fairly short order, Easan discovered that the land responded to his (and the fiend's) every whim.

Current Sketch: Easan continues his experiments with spirits, although he has long since forgotten why he is conducting them. He spends most of his time in the manor house beyond the Cliffs of Vesanis, venturing out only when he needs new test subjects. On rare occasions, he will spend time in the palace he dreamed into existence at the heart of the domain's only town. His only amusement is transforming parts of his domain when an urge strikes him. For the most part, however, he remains focused on his experiments. His reasons for conducting them change daily, but he is invariably searching from some secret relating to the soul.

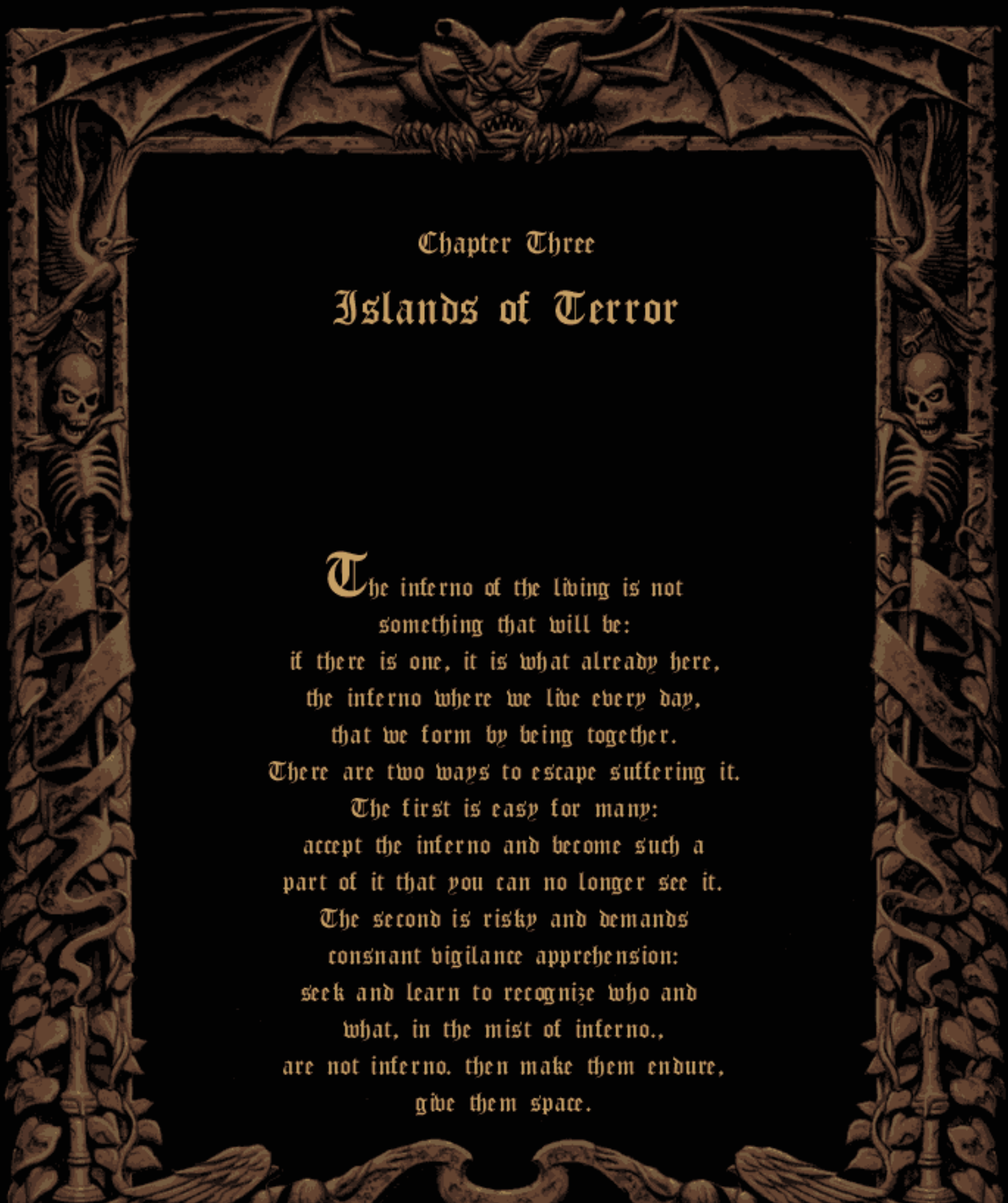
Recently, the Mists retreated from the boundaries of Vechor, and allowed the realm to join the Core as the eastern boundary of the Nocturnal Sea.

Closing the Borders: When Easan wishes to seal the domain, those attempting to leave without his permission are haunted with the unbearable sound of mad laughter, driving even the strongest characters quite insane. Any character hearing this sound loses one point of Wisdom per round. This attribute loss ceases if the character moves back toward the center of the domain. These characters regain their lost Wisdom points at a rate of one per day. Characters that continue toward the border will always reach a Wisdom of 0 and collapse long before they ever exit the domain. These characters become hopelessly mad and never regain any of the lost points.

Combat: Easan has the combat abilities of an elf (as described in Appendix Two: Character Races at the end of this book). In addition, he casts spells as a 12th-level wild mage. Although Easan wielded a far more disciplined form of magic on Oerth, the dark powers have granted him this new form of magic. He need never memorize spells, as he can cast any wild magic at will (rolling appropriate checks on the surge table in the *Tome of Magic*).

Additionally, the land has granted Easan immortality. If killed, his body regenerates all injuries (including disintegration) within two weeks of his death.

Finally, Easan can also read the thoughts of every sentient being in his domain.



Chapter Three

Islands of Terror

The inferno of the living is not
something that will be:
if there is one, it is what already here,
the inferno where we live every day,
that we form by being together.
There are two ways to escape suffering it.
The first is easy for many:
accept the inferno and become such a
part of it that you can no longer see it.
The second is risky and demands
consnant vigilance apprehension:
seek and learn to recognize who and
what, in the mist of inferno.,
are not inferno. then make them endure,
give them space.


– Italo Calvino
Invisible Sities

Many of the domains in Ravenloft float independently in the Misty Border, forming isolated Islands of Terror. Each is permanently surrounded by the Mists and has no physical link to any other domain. These Islands are continually forming and disappearing, so no complete listing of them can be established.

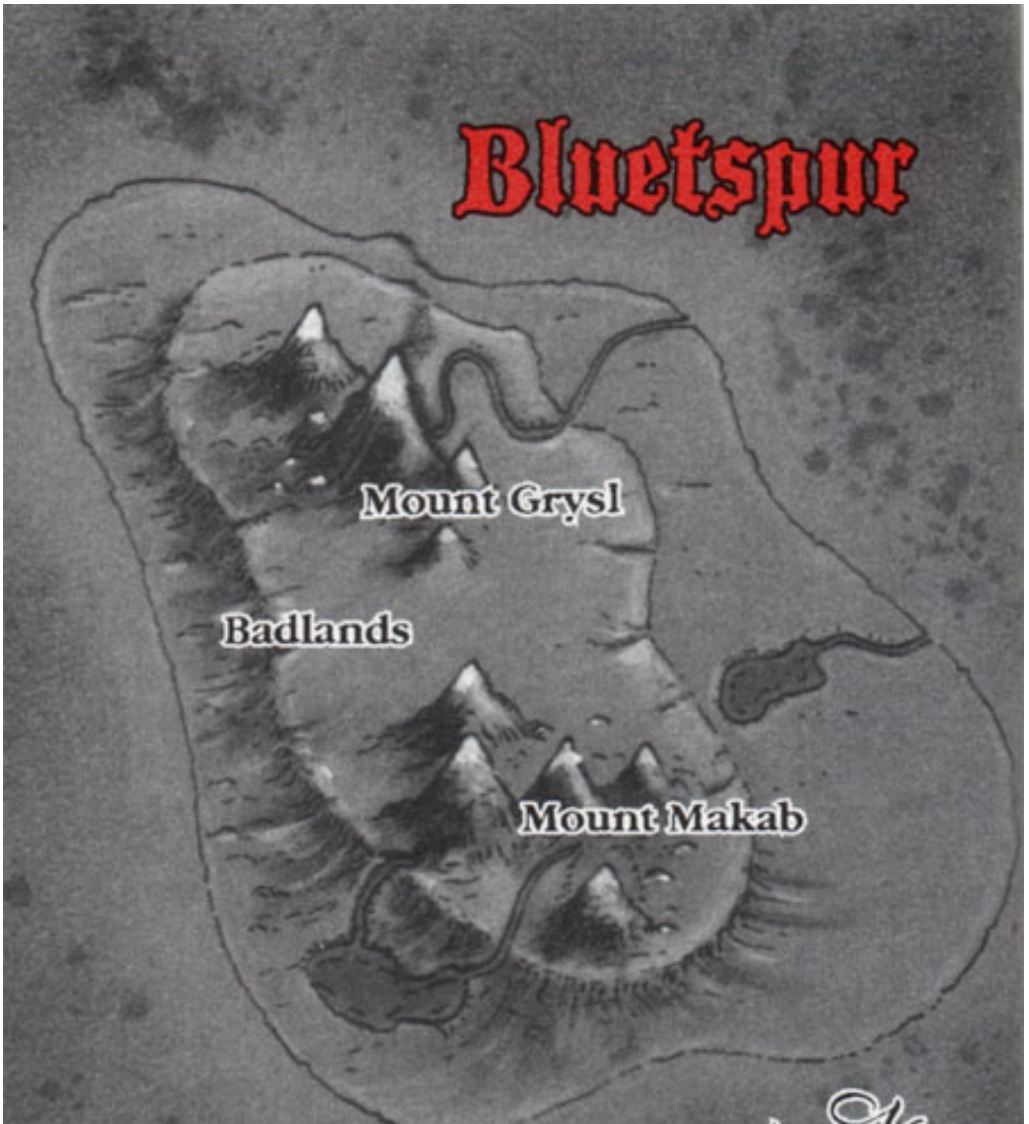
This chapter contains information on Bluetspur, G'Henna, I'Cath, Kalidnay, Nosos, Odiare, Souragne, and Vorostokov.

The Nature of Islands

The Islands of Terror are some of the most unstable domains in the Demiplane. In time, most Island domains stabilize. Sometimes, however, the domain lord is eventually deemed unworthy of being a lord. In these cases, the Island ceases to exist, either returning to the Mists or to the plane from which it was snatched. Alternatively, if the lord proves himself sufficiently foul, the Island might stabilize and join the Core or one of the Clusters. More infrequently, a Core or Cluster domain may even be reduced to an isolated Island in the Mists.

The Grand Conjunction seems to have had its greatest impact on the Islands of Terror. At its conclusion, many of the older Islands were drawn together to form Clusters. Solitary Islands still float in the Mists, but some of the familiar ones have changed.

Bluetspur



The Land: Formerly a Core domain, Bluetspur is now a barren Island domain floating in the Mists. This unearthly place appears to have been physically broken off from the Core. Along its mountain chain (formerly part of the Balinoks), massive spurs of rock jut from the peaks at impossible angles, defying gravity. Stone arches bridge the summits, and corkscrew spires rise from the rock as if they were violently driven up through the surface.

The sun never shines in this land, so it has no distinct day or night. However, the entire horizon glows with the ruddy hue of dusk, casting a reddish tint over the land and constituting "day". When "night" falls, the sky becomes completely black, and lightning begins to strike with electrifying frequency. Those who remain under the open skies during these storms cannot hope to survive. However, those who take shelter underground must deal with the mind flayers.

Though various streams drain from the



mountains, vegetation is almost nonexistent due to the absence of sunlight. A few species of sticky fungi grow in the crevices at lower elevations, but the land is otherwise barren and stony.

Cultural Level: An alien form of dark-age domain.

The Folk: No people live above the ground in this domain. The only inhabitants of Bluetspur are the illithids (also know as mind flayers), their slaves, and a growing number of vampiric illithids.

The Law: This domain is ruled by a powerful being known only as the god-brain. This creature uses mental domination to control his subjects.

Native Player Characters: There are no player characters native to Bluetspur.

Personalities of Note: The High Master Illithid, a 20th-level metapsionicist, constantly seeks the means to usurp the pow and position of the god-brain. He and Lyssa von Zarovich (a relative of Strahd) were the creators of the vampire illithids thi threaten the current inhabitants of Bluetspur.

Encounters: The vampire illithids are rabidly insane mon sters, but one of them has retained enough of its intelligent to become even more dangerous. Its name is Athaekeetha, and it is featured in the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II.

The number of vampire illithids in Bluetspur is constantly increasing. Thus, characters who remain above ground in this domain have a 25% chance twice per day of encountering 1d4 of these vile creatures.

> **Vampire lllithid:** AC 1; MV 12; HD 8+3; THACO 10 (8); #AT 4; Dmg 1d6+4 each (tentacle plus Strength bonus); SA vampiric Strength (18/76), energy drain, mind blast; SD energy absorption, regeneration (3 hp/round); MR 90%; SZ M; ML 20; Int non (0); AL CE; XP 10,000.
>
> **Notes:** Once per round, with a successful tentacle attack, a vampire lllithid can drain two life energy levels from its victim. If it succeeds, it also regains two Hit Dice worth of hit points from previously assessed damage (but it cannot gain more than initial hit points).
>
> Mind blast creates a cone 60' long, 5' wide at base, and 20' wide at end. This can be done once per round. Victim must save vs. wand at -4 or be stunned for 1d6 rounds, and he must make a madness check with -4 penalty.
>
> **Personality:** insane.

Due to the electrical storms, any character who remains above ground during the "night" must make a successful saving throw vs. rod, staff, or wand each round or be struck by a bolt of lightning. Failure to save indicates that the character suffers 8d6 points of damage (save again for half damage). Characters may take refuge under the rock outcroppings, but they will have no room to fight if attacked.

The living mind flayers appear at the surface only occasionally. However, the use of magic here creates an arcane resonance which can attract their attention. Each time a character casts a spell, he has a percentage chance equal to twice the level of

the spell to draw the attention of the mind flayers. If the detection roll is successful, 2d6 mind flayers teleport into the area 1d4 rounds later. They always attempt to subdue visitors and add them to their slave pool.

Each night spent in Bluetspur also brings horrid nightmares. The dreamer imagines dark, foul creatures slinking out from the rock and devouring all that is good. A horror check is required when the character awakens.

Further Reading: The adventure *Thoughts of Darkness* provides more information on Bluetspur and details the events surrounding the creation of vampire illithids.

Lord of Bluetspur

Illithid God-Brain, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	10
Movement	18 (Sw)
Level/ Hit Dice	20
Hit Points	99
THAC0	11
No. of Attacks	1
Damage/ Attack	See below
Special Attacks	Psionics
Special Defences	Psionics
Magic Resistance	Nil

Little is known about this strange life form, except that it rules the Island of Bluetspur. Its lair is believed to lie deep beneath Mount Makab, where it floats in a deep pool of brine. Supposedly, it resembles a gigantic brain, although some sages insist that it is a mass of smaller brains merged together.

Background: How this creature earned its own domain remains unknown.

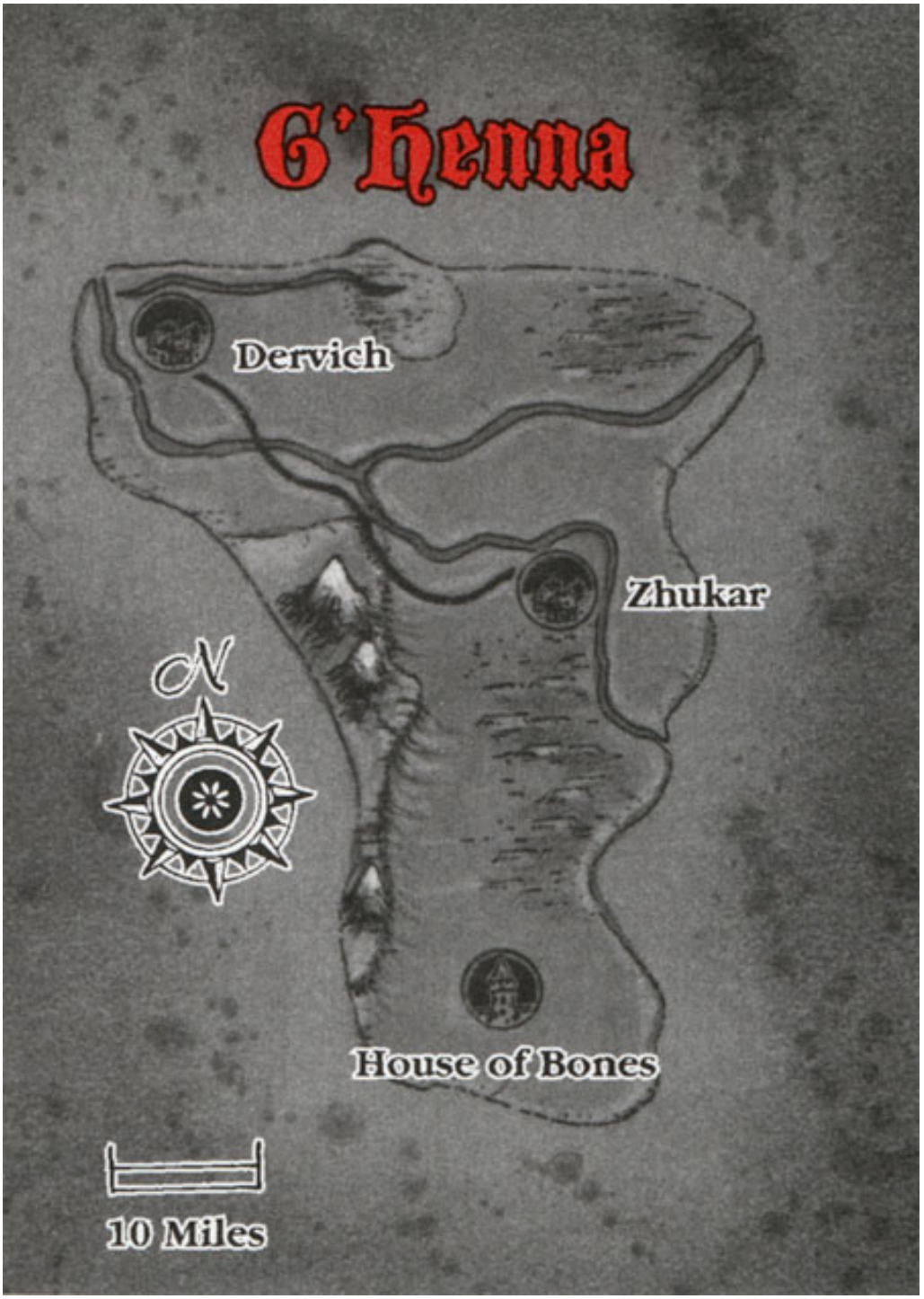
Current Sketch: Those few who have escaped Bluetspur claim that the god-brain constantly intruded on their subconscious minds, drawing forth their darkest thoughts and fears. It may be that the lord lives vicariously through other sentient beings, very few of which exist on this Island.

The lord of Bluetspur is keenly aware of the High Master Illithid's plots to usurp it and seems to enjoy its rebellious servant. The god-brain knows that it possesses the power to crush the High Master at any time, so it does not worry about these plans.

Closing the Borders: The closure of this domain has never been witnessed - or at least reported. However, physical exits from the underground colony of the mind flayers are rumored to seal with rock.

Combat: The god-brain has unlimited Psionic Strength Points and always achieves the result of having rolled the power score in all sciences and devotions (see *The Complete Psionics Handbook*). All psychic contest and saving throws against any of the lord's powers are made with a -10 penalty. The lord's psionic power contact is always made automatically, and no telepathic defenses, powers, or devices can prevent it.

G'henna



The Land: The dying Island of G'Henna is ruled by priests of Zhakata, the beast-god. Formerly in the center of the Core, this domain was torn free during the Grand Conjunction and now exists in total isolation in the Mists.

It is rumored that Zhakata, a deity worshiped only in G'Henna, recently walked these barren planes in his guise as the Devourer. He apparently left great devastation in his wake.

The climate of G'Henna is dry and chilly, and the soil is mostly rocky and thin. The land here is crossed by two rivers and a handful of streams that flood in the spring, dry to a muddy trickle in summer, and freeze solid in winter. Peasants struggle to grow crops of any kind, and herd animals continually roam in search of adequate grazing land. In the winter, which lasts for five months out of the year, many animals and peasants freeze to death.

Zhukar, the principal city of G'Henna, is the religious and cultural center of the realm. Yagno Petrovna, High Priest of Zhakata, rules here from the grand cathedral towering above the city. The city once was home to roughly ten thousand people but now houses barely four thousand. The rest of the population either fled from Zhakata's wrath or fell victim to it. Further, the town's main trade item, a fine beer brewed with barley and rare herbs found north of the city, is no longer being produced, since grain shipments no longer arrive from Falkovnia.

The only other city in Q'Henna was Dervich. Once a bustling trade city, it is now all but abandoned. Its trade vanished along with its link to the Core, and those people that remained here were all slain by the Devourer. Now, the city is a deserted ruin, home only to phantoms.

The barren Outlands in southern G'Henna are home to scattered farmsteads and communities of mongrelmen. Many of these communities were also destroyed in the recent calamity.

In winter, G'Henna is so harsh that rivers freeze solid, and entire herds of cattle die of exposure. Spring brings even worse conditions - floods and mudslides from the mountain thaws, and famine and pestilence as the winter stores come to an end. The people call it the "Season of Zhakata's Banquet". Yagno preaches during this season that the blessed dead feast eternally at Zhakata's side and so will the faithful.

Cultural Level: Classical.

The Folk: G'Hennan natives are pale and thin, and most have sparse, black hair. Adult men wear beards, each using wax to twist his into a long, single strand. Married women cover their heads at all times. Esteemed brethren of the church wear garish colors, particularly red, but the peasants uniformly wear drab rags. The only language commonly spoken is Balok, although a few residents of Zhukar know Falkovnian.

All aspects of G'Hennan life revolve around the worship of Zhakata, the only religion permitted in this land. Worshiping this god is an exercise in extreme sacrifice. Starvation is considered an honorable death, as it proves one's devotion to Zhakata. Families who would find favor with the god must choose one of their members to starve to death in homage while the rest eat.

A typical home is filled with religious artifacts. The guesting cup is one of the most valuable personal items a family can own. This drinking vessel, made from the skull of a family member who willingly starved for Zhakata, is offered to all visitors.

G'Hennans are a numb and cautious lot. They have seen so much death that they have become hardened to it. They do not even name children until they reach the age of six, since many do not survive that long.

G'Hennans treat outsiders politely, provided they adhere to Zhakatan etiquette. Regular fasting is expected of all visitors to the Island. Because it is obscene and blasphemous to be overweight, fat strangers suffer reaction penalties, varying from -1 to -3 depending on the degree of obesity.

Native Player Characters: Heroes native to G'Henna can belong to any character class. Priests, however, must be devoted to Zhakata the Provider. These characters still believe that Zhakata the beast-god is both the Devourer and the Provider, though this belief was declared heretical by Yagno some years ago. As a result, priests of the Provider often flee the city and live in hiding. G'Hennan characters receive the desert survival proficiency for free.

Personalities of Note: Although Yagno and the priesthood are still the undisputable masters of G'Henna, a cunning bandit leader known as the Jackal has gained control over portions of the Outlands. A 6th-level thief weathered from a lifetime spent in the G'Hennan Outlands, she leads a mixed bands of humans, mongrelmen, and kobolds from a base near the heart of G'Henna. She hates priests of all kinds.

The Law:Yagno Petrovna, high priest of Zhakata, rules G'Henna. He is both the spiritual and the political leader of the domain. The priesthood controls most aspects of society, and they zealously carry out Yagno's commands. Priest are generally equipped with leather armor and scourges.

All food grown in G'Henna is immediately surrendered to the church. The food is then offered to the beast-god in a private, sunrise ceremony known as Zhakata's Taking. (In reality, the priests sacrifice only a meager portion at Zhakata's altar, dividing the rest amongst themselves and the soldiers.) Whatever Zhakata does not take by the endol the day is doled out by the priests in a sunset ceremony known as Zhakata's Dole. It is illegal to buy or sell food in G'Henna, punishable by a severe fine, imprisonment, and heavy labor on minimal rations. Prisoners usually die before completing their sentences.

The priests also are charged with seeking out those who preach of Zhakata the Provider. Yagno believes that these heretics

have angered the Devourer, causing the recent devastation.

Heretics are turned into mongrelmen when Yagno performs a special ceremony on the high towers of his cathedral. The rite captures the victim's human essence and transforms it into that of a beast. To date, no foreigner has suffered this atrocious transformation, nor has it ever been reversed once it has occurred.

Encounters: Most encounters in G'Henna are almost always with humans and mongrelmen, not unintelligent monsters. Humans are either peasants (90%), priests (5%), or some of Jackal's bandits (5%). Occasionally, changelings, giant insects, and small packs of wolves can be encountered in the Outlands.

G'Henna is often swept by severe windstorms. Travelers must take shelter against these gales, though it is rumored that the mongrelmen seek them out. Further, the harsh sun and lack of trees make sunburn and windburn a perpetual hazard.

Further Reading: G'Henna is explored in great detail in *Circle of Darkness*. This adventure focuses on the time of the great devastation, when the creature believed to be Zhakata walked the land.

Lord of G'Nenna

Yagno Petrovna
11th-Level Human Priest, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	10	Str	13
Movement	12	Dex	11
Level/ Hit Dice	11	Con	14
Hit Points	45	Int	12
THAC0	14	Wis	15
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	18
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Polymorph touch (see below)		
Special Defences	Spells (7/5/4/3/2)		
Magic Resistance	Nil		



Yagno has a long, pale, narrow face with features that are more like thin lines than three-dimensional protrusions. His bloodshot eyes are usually opened just a slit, and his thin lips spread into a wide, flat grimace. Yagno always wears priestly garb, usually red or orange silk robes like the other clergymen of Q'Henna, and a tight-fitting hood that leaves only his face exposed. Over the hood he wears a cap with strange, stiff folds. A braided cord worked with beads drapes over his left shoulder and runs under his right arm like a sash. The smallest of these beads are human teeth.

Background: The Petrovna family lived in Barovia when the region was pulled into Ravenloft. Some of them are buried in Castle Ravenloft, but others managed to survive in the mountains, staying away from that evil castle. However, this isolation led to inbreeding.

Yagno was born in 674, and even as a child, his family

thought him deranged. His brothers often humiliated and beat him. Alone or skulking in corners, Yagno babbled to imaginary people and cowered before make-believe beasts. At age twenty-two, he built an altar in a cave and began sacrificing animals to Zhakata, a nonexistent god to whom Yagno began devoting his life. At twenty-seven, he attempted to do the same to his sister's newborn child, so the Petrovna family chased him into the Mists. Ravenloft welcomed Yagno and made for him a land in which he could continue where he left off in Barovia - worshiping a false god of his own creation.



Soon after coming to G'Henna, Yagno began to be plagued by doubts about Zhakata. He wondered why his deity had never directly communicated with him, so he hired a wizard who claimed to have the power to summon Zhakata. In truth, the wizard summoned a nalfeshnee, a fiend named Malistroi. Malistroi claimed that Zhakata was false and had never existed. Yagno became enraged; he killed the wizard and left the fiend bound in a magical circle.

About five years ago, Malistroi escaped and attempted to take over G'Henna and kill Yagno, destroying a great deal of the domain in the process. Yagno narrowly defeated the fiend, but G'Henna still bears scars from the encounter. For a while, Yagno believed that his victory was a sign of Zhakata's approval, but his confidence was short-lived.

Current Sketch: Yagno believes that he is the prophet of Zhakata, so his entire domain is built around the worship of this false god. However, the continued isolation of G'Henna from the Core of Ravenloft has magnified Yagno's religious doubts. He still fears that Malistroi's taunts were true and that Zhakata does not exist. To hide his growing doubts, Yagno has become even more fanatical and desperate in clinging to his misguided faith.

Closing the Borders: When Yagno wants to seal his domain, a wall of jeering animal skulls appears before any character within one hundred feet of the border. This wall extends far into the heavens, and no amount of magic or muscle can move it. As soon as the character heads back into G'Henna, the wall disappears.

Combat: Yagno Petrovna is an 11th-level priest of Zhakata and a master of the dagger. (Zhakata is not real; Ravenloft grants Yagno his spells.) His spheres are all, charm, combat, elemental, healing (reverse only), and summoning.

The rest of his abilities as lord of G'Henna are derived from the great Altar atop his temple. In order to use these abilities, he must be within one hundred yards of the Altar (or a piece of it). To use these powers upon an unwilling subject, Yagno must perform before a flock of worshipers.

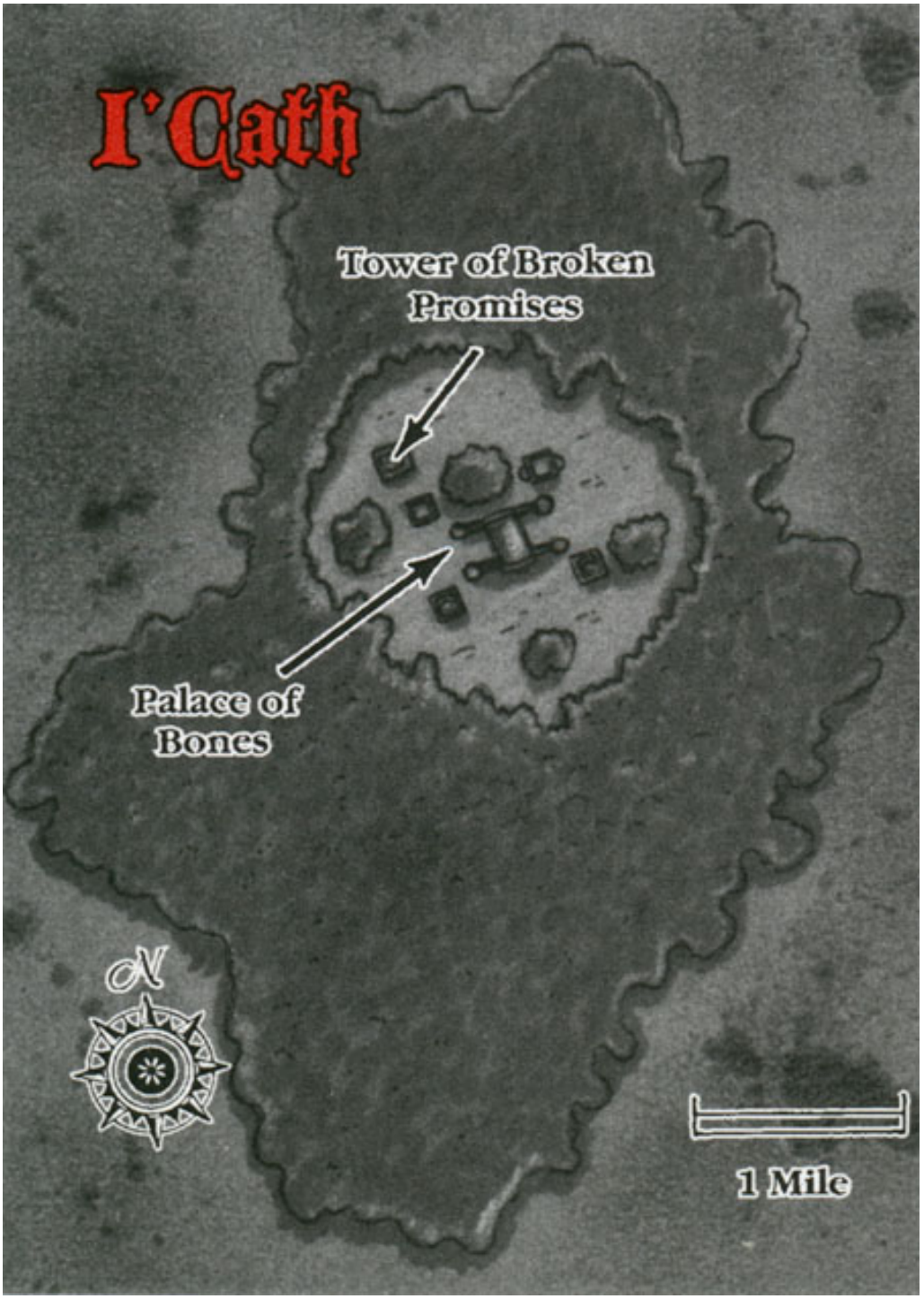
From the Altar, Yagno has the ability to charm the masses. Anyone listening to his sermon for more than one turn must make a successful saving throw vs. spell or suffer the effects of a *charm person* spell. For natives, the duration is doubled, but for nonnatives, the duration is reduced: Months become weeks, weeks become days, and days become hours.

He also has a special ability that allows him to change humanoids into mongrelmen (see the Monstrous Manual tome). He can do this three times per day merely by raking his fingers across their temples and chest. His victims receive no saving throw. At any time, Yagno can reverse the process with another touch, but he never does. The only ways to restore his victims are by casting *remove curse* during a wind storm or with a *polymorph other* spell. This power cannot transform anyone who does not believe in Zhakata. The mongrelmen created by this process are subsequently driven into the

wilderness.

Lastly, Yagno gains a three-point bonus to both his Armor Class and all saving throws when within range of the High Altar. The Altar will also regenerate Yagno at the rate of 1 hit point per turn.

I'Cath



The Land: I'Cath is a domain of shadowy woods where the sky is forever gray with threatening clouds. Tsien lives in the Palace of Bones, a huge castle built from the bones of her daughters' suitors. She even made carpets from their hair, clothing from their flesh, and painted the walls with their blood, which delighted her three evil daughters: Scream, Hate, and Spite.

Surrounding the Palace of Bones are four shrines, each housing one of Tsien's unholy bells, to which are bound the spirits of her daughters. They are called the Bell of Doom, the Bell of Discord, the Bell of Treachery, and the Bell of Lament. If Tsien and her evil daughters are to be killed, the bells must be destroyed first, but only a disintegrate spell, limited wish, or wish will destroy them. If all four bells are destroyed, Tsien becomes mortal. The first three bells begin to peal if anyone but Tsien approaches within ninety feet, but a *silence* spell will prevent this. All of the bells save as 16 HD monsters.

The peal of the Bell of Doom summons one troll each round. If this bell is destroyed. Scream may be slain. The peal of the Bell of Discord rings with a clashing cacophony of mismatched tones. Anyone within ninety feet becomes filled with hatred and must make a successful saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty or go berserk and attack the nearest living creature. If this bell is destroyed. Hate may be slain. The Bell of Treachery clangs with a cold, hard knell. It is guarded by four Ravenloft elementals (see the Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II) that magically appear when the bell begins to ring. Each peal restores ten hit points to any injured elementals, while inflicting three points of damage to all enemies with ninety feet. If this bell is destroyed, Spite may be slain.

The Bell of Lament contains the spirit of Tsien's good daughter, Nightingale. This bell peals if any creature not of good alignment (aside from Tsien Chiang) comes within ninety feet. Its peal inflicts 3d6 points of damage per round, doubled against undead and lower-plane creatures. The bell does not damage those of good alignment, however.

The mortal body of Nightingale, which has become that of a nymph, is locked at the summit of a high tower made of a weblike substance. (Tsien claims to have made the tower from the broken promises of men, "the one substance that the world has in limitless abundance".) Nightingale's song forever emanates from the tower, casting an enchantment of delight and sorrow on all who hear it. She can also project herself, through force of will, to become a living song. In this shimmering ethereal form, she often wanders I'Cath, unwittingly luring men into her mother's torturous clutches. The stairs to the Tower of Broken Promises are endless. Thus, the only way to climb this tower is to meet Nightingale wandering in her song form, persuade her to change into a giant bird, and then ride her to the top of the tower.

Beyond the shrines, four groves of trees guard the entrance to I'Cath. A specially enchanted fruit tree grows in each grove, guarded by four evil treants. *The Tree of the Ravenous* causes any who partake of its fruit to either make successful saving throws vs. poison or become so obsessed that they will fight to the death anyone who tries to stop them from eating it. Cinder the tree, dozens of warriors fight eternally, since any who die in this battle are automatically resurrected. The *Tree of Unending Lamentation* causes those who come within ninety feet of it to either make successful saving throws vs. paralyzation or be overcome with grief. These people sit here weeping pitifully forever, sustaining themselves only by eating the leaves of the tree. The *Tree of Venom* is an extremely poisonous orange tree. Those who eat its fruit must make successful saving throws vs. poison with a -6 penalty or die immediately; even those who succeed lose 1 d6 hit points permanently. The *Tree of Mice* causes those who eat its fruit to be filled with evil thoughts. Victims must make successful saving throws vs. spell or become chaotic evil for four days. An additional saving throw must then be made for each evil act the characters commit. If one of these saving throws fails, the alignment change becomes permanent.

Cultural Level: Classical.

The Folk: No one lives in I'Cath except for Tsien Chiang, her four daughters, and anyone unfortunate enough to be trapped in the groves.

The Law: The master of this land is Tsien Chiang, a foul sorceress, whose name is almost synonymous with evil in the realms of Kara-Tur, on the world of Toril.

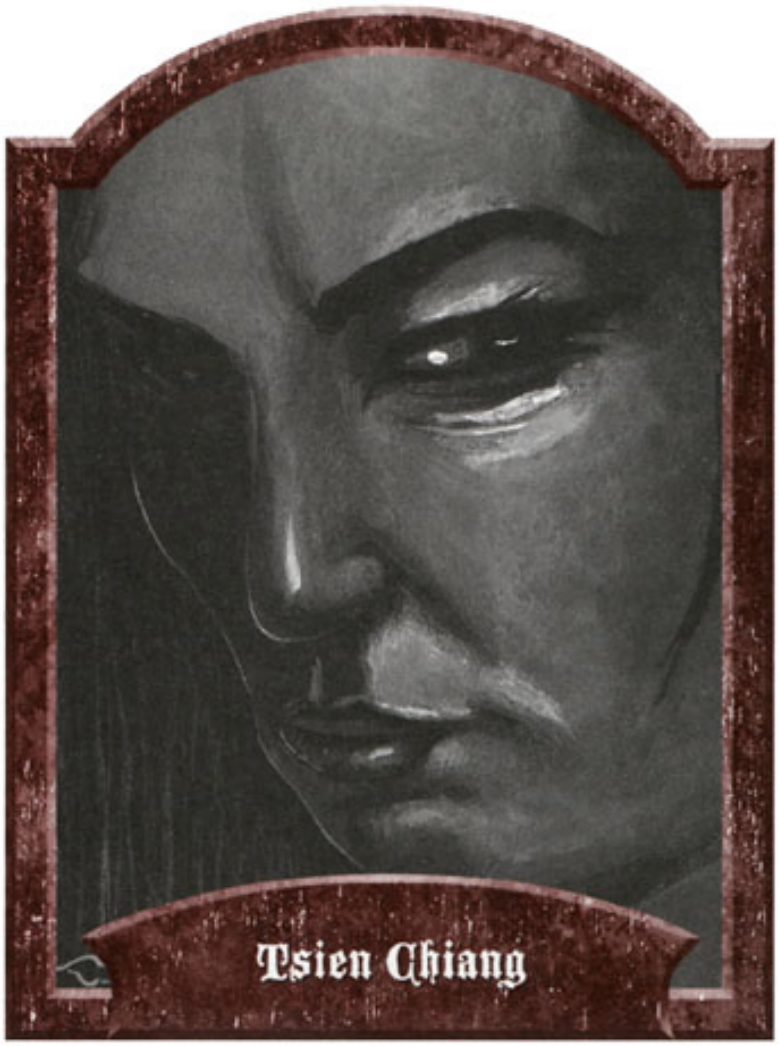
Native Player Characters: There are no native player characters from I'Cath.

Encounters: The four groves are dangerous to any who enter this domain. The evil treants are sure to attack any who damage the groves or interfere in any way. All characters who enter I'Cath must pay homage to Tsien, bringing her great gifts, or she will try to kill them. Often, she will attempt to kill the men anyway.

Further Reading: I'Cath is detailed in the game accessory *Islands of Terror*.

The Lord of I'Cath

Tsien Chiang
20th-Level Human Necromancer, Neutral Evil



Armor Class	7	Str	11
Movement	12	Dex	17
Level/ Hit Dice	20	Con	15
Hit Points	45	Int	20
THAC0	14	Wis	18
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	15
Damage/ Attack	1d4 (dagger)		
Special Attacks	Spells (6/6/6/6/6/5/4/4/3)		
Special Defences	Spells		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Tsien Chiang is an evil and powerful sorceress determined to either bend all men to her will or destroy them.

Background: The evil of the powerful sorceress Tsien Chiang was matched only by that of three of her daughters. The fourth was so good of heart and pure of spirit that her mother and sisters could not bear her existence. They attempted to beat her to death, and then imprisoned her in the Tower of Broken Promises. It was this act that made the dark powers draw I'Cath into the Mists.

Current Sketch: Tsien Chiang has long harbored a pathological hatred for men and will not tolerate any man to exist in I'Cath unless he swears subservience to her and can provide her with a valuable gift. Even if a man does this, he may not live long, for the three evil daughters will use their great beauty (using *change self*) to seduce him and eventually destroy him in honor of their mother. These daughters have become hags, and they cannot be killed unless the bells are destroyed.

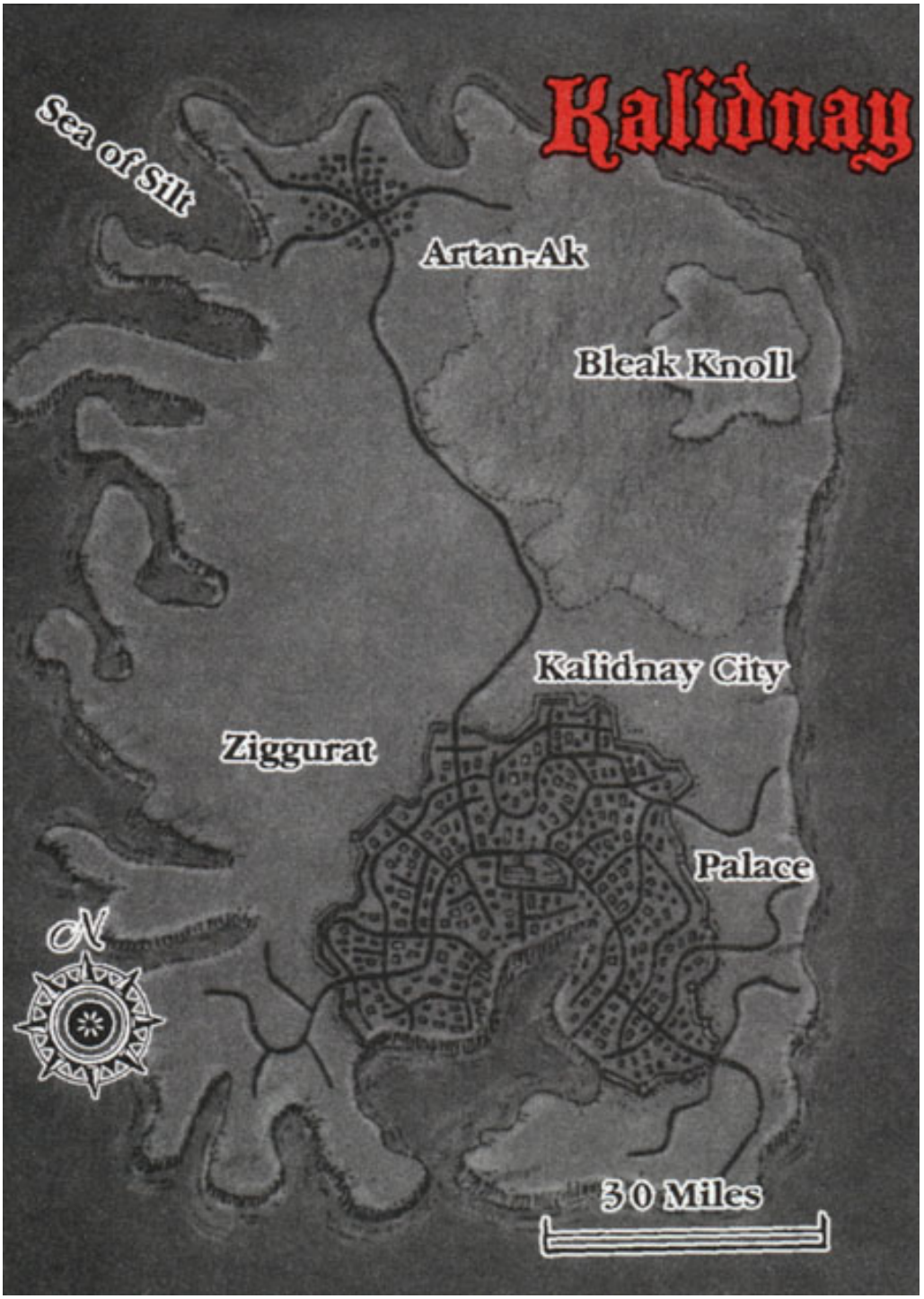
Closing the Borders: Though Tsien does not like anyone entering her domain, she seems to have no way to close her borders.

Combat: Because Tsien hates visitors, she will probably try to kill any she finds. Unless all four bells are destroyed, she reforms in three rounds after she is killed, with full hit points and all spells rememorized. Tsien's spell books contain all the spells from each of the wizard schools except illusion and enchantment/charm.

Tsien can also transform into an evil treant with the following statistics:

> **Tsien Chiang (evil treant):** AC -3; MV 12; HD 12; hp 96; THACO 6; #AT 2; Dmg 4d6 (+8 Strength bonus)/4d6 (+8 Strength bonus); SA constricting vines (can attack four opponents at once; each vine requires an attack roll; tangled victims can do nothing but try to escape; each vine has 16 hp), sap spray (causes 10d10 acid damage against single target, save vs. poison with -2 penalty for half damage); SD need +2 magical weapon or better to hit; AL NE.

Kalidnay



The Land: The weather in Kalidnay is a study in extremes. During the day, an immense red sun blasts upon the land, driving temperatures up to one hundred fifteen degrees Fahrenheit and higher. Three greenish moons rise in the night sky, while temperatures quickly plunge to just shy of freezing.

Survival in the domain of Kalidnay is a challenge for any character. Water cannot be found except in the two settlements of Kalidnay and Artan-Ak. A constant wind blows across the sands, whipping it into the eyes of travelers and stinging their skin.

The city of Kalidnay is a sprawling place that once held fifteen thousand people, although now it is quite underpopulated. Roughly twenty-three hundred souls make their home here. In the center of Kalidnay stands a ziggurat, an elaborate structure over one hundred feet high, surrounded by a palace complex. These are the only buildings in the city that are in good repair, housing the land's ruler and sorcerer-king, Kalid-Ma. Despite the best efforts of the citizens, the fields around the city of Kalidnay consistently produce poor crops.

Only two hundred people dwell in Artan-Ak, though their community is surrounded by the best farmland in the domain. Over two-thirds of the food grown here is sent to Kalidnay to feed the city. The inhabitants of Artan-Ak are not willing participants in this process; armed caravans are dispatched regularly to escort the harvest to the city. Many in Artan-Ak go hungry every year to feed the citizens of Kalidnay.

Kalidnay is an island surrounded by a basin of loose sand. The natives refer to this as the Silt Sea, and travel here is very difficult. Special equipment (skimmer crafts or specially made shoes that resemble snowshoes) is needed to cross the Silt Sea. The Mists only appear in Kalidnay at night, rising up from the silt that surrounds the domain.

Cultural Level: Classical. (Note: The people of Kalidnay do not forge metal weapons, but instead use stone, bone, and

obsidian. This is not due to a lack of knowledge, but due to a lack of metal. In Kalidnay, iron is rarer than water.)

The Folk: The folk of Kalidnay are light-skinned, with hair colors ranging from reddish-blond to black. They favor loose-fitting clothes, with skirts and vests among the most common clothing for both men and women. The people frequently wear masks or veils in order to protect their eyes and faces from the scouring sandstorms that whip across the domain.

Psionics are common among the people of Kalidnay. In fact, not having psionic ability is considered an aberration in this domain. On the other hand, wizards are reviled, often hunted down and killed if discovered. This is because magic in Kalidnay saps life from the land itself.

Water here is more precious than gold. Spitting is considered a grave insult, and crying is an expression of ultimate sorrow.

The people of the domain do not acknowledge any gods, save Kalid-Ma the sorcerer-king, who grants spellcasting abilities to his servants, the templars. Other priests rarely exist, and only those serving elemental powers.

Inhabitants of Artan-Ak hate the city dwellers. In this smaller village, they believe Kalid-Ma has been usurped by head templar Thakok-An. Although they have no love for the sorcerer-king, they blame their current problems on the templar. Renegades and rebels are welcomed here with open arms, but the "underground" is riddled with templar spies.

Arena combat is a popular diversion among the people of Kalidnay. Once a week, accused criminals battle each other to the delight of the citizens.

Native Player Characters: Kalidnay originates in the DARK SUN setting, so characters from this domain should be generated using those rules. All DARK SUN player character races but thri-kreen are found here. It should be noted, however, that defilers must make a dark powers check every time they cast a spell. The percentage chance of attracting the attention of the powers is equal to the level of the spell.

Personalities of Note: A banshee haunts the wastes between the city and Artan-Ak. Known as Uran-Tor, she was an elf templar who devotedly served Thakok-An and purportedly paid for this devotion with her life.

The Law: Kalid-Ma is the undisputed master of Kalidnay, and the inhabitants honor him as a god. He has, however, been in seclusion for over twenty years. His loyal head templar, the half-elf Thakok-An, is the only being allowed to see him, and she carries out his decrees with unswerving devotion.

Encounters: Kalidnites may be encountered in both settlements. In the city, characters have a 40% chance of encountering templars, who will attempt to capture all foreigners so that they may be interrogated by Thakok-An and perhaps be put into the arena to do battle. What few wild animals formerly existed in this domain have been hunted to extinction.

Further Reading: The DARK SUN campaign setting details the harsh world of Athas, which Kalidnay mirrors.

Lord of Kalidnay

Thakok-An
12th-Level Half-Elf Templar/
12th-Level Psionicist, Lawful Evil



Armor Class	10	Str	9
Movement	12	Dex	13
Level/ Hit Dice	12	Con	12
Hit Points	45	Int	14
THAC0	14	Wis	16
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	13
Damage/ Attack	1d6-1 (bone club)		
Special Attacks	Life draining, priest spells (8/7/5/3/2)		
Special Defences	Priest psells		
Magic Resistance	Nil		
PSP	143		

Psychokinesis: telekinesis, ballistic attack, molecular agitation
Psychometabolism: animal affinity, adrenalin control, body control, body weaponry, cell adjustment
Psychoportation: teleport, dimensional door, teleport trigger
Telepathy (primary): domination (+1), probe, mind link, conceal thoughts, contact, ego whip, id insinuation, invisibility (+1), mind bar, phobia amplification.
Defense Modes: mind blank, thought shield, mental barrier, tower of iron will, intellect fortress

Thakok-An is six feet tall and of average build for a female half-elf. Her braided hair is long and black, accenting the twin yellow orbs of her eyes.

Like many Athasians, she wears a facial cover. A piece of jeweled hide covers the upper part of her face, with two large holes for her eyes and a wide slot for her nose. Her headdress is ornate, with triple ridges running over the skull and down the back. Loose-flowing robes of brilliant white complete her garb. She carries a bone spear delicately carved with symbols and sigils, treating it as a symbol of office, although it is not.

Background: A great city known as Kalidnay once existed on the world Athas, ruled by the brutal sorcerer-king Kalid-Ma. He was noted for his strict laws, and even stricter enforcement. Even his own templars - men and women who served both as his enforcers and the city's religious leaders - were not immune to the law. Thus, Kalidnay had a reputation for being a harsh but fair city, unusual on Athas.

His most loyal templar was Thakok-An. A vicious woman, she retained her post by zealously enforcing all decrees and constantly extolling Kalid-Ma's virtues, appealing to his vanity. Singing the praises of her king was easy, since she desired him above all things.

The sorcerer-king of Kalidnay was unmatched in the arts of defiling magic (a type of spellcasting unique to Athas, where the caster draws life force from the surrounding area to power the spell). He was so strong, in fact, that the sorcerer-kings of the other cities feared him and plotted to kill him.

Thakok-An learned of their plot. Instead of telling Kalid-Ma about the plan, Thakok-An instead chose to save him herself and thereby earn his undying devotion. Maddened by the thought of losing him, she turned to the books of arcane lore stored in the king's palace, learning how to speed the process her king was already embarked upon - that of becoming a Dragon of

Athas, the most powerful being on the planet. The price would be high, but she did not hesitate to pay it.

As Kalid-Ma performed the nightly ceremony required as part of his eventual ascension to the rank of Dragon, Thakok-An brought her family to the top of the sorcerer-king's ziggurat. One by one, she slaughtered them in gruesome fashion. The blood of her own mother spilled across the stones of the ziggurat as Kalid-Ma completed the ritual in his chamber below. Anguished cries rose from the city below, as the ziggurat cracked and wave upon wave of powerful defiler magic swept outward from the ziggurat. The people of Kalidnay were completely drained of their life force. Thakok-An crouched on the top of the collapsing building, knowing that something had gone wrong. From what she had read, the ziggurat should not have cracked, nobody else should have died, and Kalid-Ma should have transformed.

Thakok-An awoke amid the rubble atop the broken ziggurat after having been struck unconscious by falling rock. The streets of Kalidnay appeared devoid of life. Climbing to the top of the palace tower, however, she saw lights and smoke at the edges of the city. Looking further, she saw that Kalidnay now sat on a plateau in a silt sea. No other land was visible in any direction.

After a full month of cleaning and restoring the ziggurat, Thakok-An found her sorcerer-king in the underground corridors. Kalid-Ma's body was unchanged, though he sleeps eternally.

Current Sketch: No force has yet been able to awaken Kalid-Ma, nor is Thakok-An certain that she wants him to awaken. In this state, Kalid-Ma belongs only to Thakok-An. However, she is also denied his favor, so the victory is ash in her mouth.

Due to his defiler nature, as Kalid-Ma sleeps, he instinctively draws upon the life force around him to prolong his existence. If he was left unattended, Kalidnay would slowly become mere ashes and bones.

To protect the remaining arable land in Kalidnay, Thakok-An holds regular combats in the city's arena. She has discovered that the life force of those who die in the arena sustains Kalid-Ma's power. So long as he is fed these life energies, everything in Kalidnay is safe, especially Thakok-An.

Thakok-An fears wizards, particularly defilers. Should a powerful defiler cast too many spells, the fragile ecosystem of Kalidnay would crumble. Since any wizard is a potential defiler, she sends them all to the arena.

Closing the Borders: Thakok-An can create a shimmering wall of heat one hundred feet out into the sea of silt surrounding the island. The first ten feet into it, each creature suffers 1d6 points of damage. The next ten feet cause 2d6 of damage, and so on. Creatures immune to fire or heat damage take two less dice worth of damage.

Combat: Thakok-An is an accomplished priest and psionicist. She has no other special abilities.

Nosos

The Land: This is one of the foulest domains in Ravenloft. When the Mists arise in this domain, no one even notices; the smoke from the refineries and burning coal mines obscure them. Rotting compost, raw sewage, and huge mounds of trash choke the streets of the city of Nosos, which makes up almost the entire domain. Everything is coated with a yellow-gray grime, and hundreds of chimneys pump thick black smoke into the air around the clock.

The countryside around the town consists of more mounds of decaying garbage, including the bodies of many deceased citizens. A few walled estates contain the only green, garbage-free areas, but even there, the stench is impossible to escape.

Cultural Level: Renaissance.

The Folk: The six thousand inhabitants of Nosos are generally pale-skinned, blue-eyed, and light-haired. They are a scrabbling, miserable folk who care nothing for the lives of others, seeking gain only for themselves. They even occasionally pull cruel pranks simply for their own amusement.

One of the ways to climb socially in Nosos is to attend the masquerade balls held by the wealthy residents. Though only other rich folk are invited, the poor people often try to sneak into the parties. Usually, they are easily detected by their stench, but some actually bathe in order to pass undetected. The rich are extremely paranoid that the poor people are carrying an incurable, infectious plague.

The Law: The law in Nosos is dictated by the whims of the wealthy. The general state of the land is near anarchy. The poor folk keep to themselves, and the wealthy use them as the need arises. The bodyguards of the wealthy enforce the desires of their employers.

Native Player Characters: All player character races and classes allowed in Ravenloft are allowed here. Characters from Nosos have Only a 20% chance of being from the upper class, in which case they are extremely frightened of disease and must make a fear check (with a +2 bonus) whenever in close proximity with a sick individual. However, upper-class characters also receive double the normal starting money. Lower-class characters receive a -1 Charisma penalty, since the smell of rotting garbage still clings to them due to their poor personal hygiene. Because of their constant exposure to the unwholesome environment of Nosos, these lower-class characters are particularly resistant to diseases of all types. Thus, they receive a saving throw vs. poison with a +1 bonus when exposed to any kind of infectious substances, including bacteria and viruses.

Encounters: In the town of Nosos, characters will probably encounter giant rats, otyughs, rot grubs, and other disease-bearing creatures. Near the huge refuse piles outside of town, characters are likely to find cannibal zombies, carrion stalkers, and geists. Also, the town is home to a growing population of wererats.

Further Reading: Further details on Nosos and its lord are given in the *Islands of Terror* accessory.

Lord of Nosos

Malus Sceleris
1st-Level Human Fighter, Neutral Evil



Armor Class	9	Str	13
Movement	12	Dex	15
Level/ Hit Dice	1	Con	13
Hit Points	14	Int	19
THAC0	19	Wis	15
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	20
Damage/ Attack	1d6 (short sword)		
Special Attacks	Disease		
Special Defences	Charm		
Magic Resistance	20%		

This recklessly handsome youth has short, neatly-trimmed brown hair and wears well-tailored, expensive clothing. He has a carefree manner and an easy, sometimes irritating, smirk which seems to mock the rest of the world.

Background: Malus Sceleris is the son of two druids, both of whom were sworn to protect the same region of forest. His mother died in childbirth, leaving the father to care for the boy. The life of a druid is sometimes harried, so his father seldom had time for Malus outside of discipline and instruction.

Malus grew to hate his father and even plotted to kill him, studying his texts for subtle and terrible murder methods. Not sure if poison would affect his father, Malus finally decided on disease. While his father was out defending the forest from brutal mercenaries and lumberjacks (hired by Malus), he infected his father's pallet with blankets that had been wrapped around lepers, the terminally ill, and dead bodies. When his father awoke the next morning racked with pain, Malus sat by to watch him die in agony. Malus then set about to destroy the forests.

Current Sketch: Even after murdering his father, Malus feels that he can never destroy enough of nature to sufficiently avenge himself. Still, after deforesting the entire area around Nosos, he could find little else to despoil. He now focuses on his extremely profitable coal mines and trade with other domains. Even though this domain is isolated by the Mists, merchants from this land seem to have no trouble finding their way to both the Sea of Sorrows and the Nocturnal Sea.

Malus Sceleris is fascinated with disease and is more knowledgeable on this subject than almost anyone else on the Demiplane. It is rumored that he fosters the diseases in Nosos in order to observe their effects on others. Some say that he even creates the diseases.

Closing the Borders: When Malus wishes to close the borders, great mounds of stinking, sliding garbage spring up around the domain. These putrid heaps, standing well over seventy-five feet high, prevent all sort of climbing, threatening to avalanche down upon those who try to climb them. Keen shards of debris inflict 1d6 points of damage for each foot climbed, slicing through even magical substances. Would-be escapees must make successful saving throws vs. spell with a -4 penalty or suffer the effects of the debilitating version of the *cause disease* spell. Those who actually reach the top are swept back down by brutal winds (no saving throw) and suffer 8d6 points of damage.

Combat: Malus has no spectacular magical powers, nor is he especially good at fighting. His only skills lie in his genius, his

shrewdness, and his bargaining powers. When it looks as though combat is inevitable, Malus will use his charm ability. The victim must make a successful saving throw vs. spell with a -4 penalty or be completely in his thrall for 1d4 days. Though this power gives him blinding headaches for hours afterward, there is no limit to how many times he can use it. If necessary, he can also resort to his disease ability. This ability is similar to the clerical *cause disease* spell (debilitating), but five times as effective. The results begin to show immediately, and unless Malus allows it, they cannot be reversed except by a *limited wish* or *wish* spell.

Odiare

The Land: This tiny Island consists of a single village. The Mists constantly surround this island, and a fog clings to the top of the buildings. Never quite managing to burn away this haze, a pale sun traces a path across the sky for six hours out of each day before plunging the domain into total darkness.

Most of the buildings here are two stories tall. Once they were mostly whitewashed, but the paint has peeled off in many cases, revealing the gray, rotting wood below. Gaping holes in many of the shingled roofs expose the inside to the elements. Though a couple of well-maintained gardens exist, the fruit and vegetables that grow here are small and sickly.

At the square in the heart of the village is a fountain with a statue of a woman, sorrow etched in her features, holding a marionette as though it were a child. Burned ruins line one side of this square.

Cultural Level: Medieval. (**Note:** Before becoming an Island of Terror, the community was at the renaissance level, so it is possible to find unused equipment expected of a higher cultural level.)

The Folk: The entire population of Odiare consists of fifty-one young people, mostly ranging in age from twelve to twenty-five years old, although a few toddlers and infants can be found as well. They are all fit and lean - some might even say skinny - and are generally in good health. This domain was snatched from the Gothic Earth setting, and the language spoken here is Italian. Most heroes who reach the Island will need to use magical means in order to understand the natives, or to make themselves understood.

Visitors who emerge from the Mists are greeted with apprehension and whispered encouragements to leave before it is too late. Once the language barrier is overcome, they will explain that ten years ago, the toys in the village came to life and murdered all the adults. The most powerful of these evil toys, the carrionette Maligno, still exists. He hides somewhere in the village, emerging only to slay travelers who come to Odiare.

Native Player Characters: Native Odiarans have grown up without schooling. For this reason, they may not be wizards or priests. Additionally, any nonweapon proficiencies that require a great deal of study are off limits to these characters. (Crafts are available, however, as many children were taught by their parents.) Reading/writing costs two proficiency slots for Odiare natives. They speak only Italian when they enter play but may learn other languages as a campaign progresses. The urban nature of Odiare also excludes rangers.

Personalities of Note: The village is led by Giselle Velutto (age eighteen) and her husband Rudolfo (age twenty-two), who are expecting their first child. Both are 1st-level thieves. Qiselle is a striking beauty, though sullen and withdrawn. Rudolfo has a dark and sinister air about him but is actually quite outgoing.

The sole-surviving adult is Guiseppe, the toymaker who created Maligno. The old man is hopelessly insane and remains in the attic of one of the homes, where he continues to make toys.

The Law: Once the children of Odiare realized that they would have to fend for themselves or starve, they became surprisingly organized. The five oldest children began tending gardens and rationing what food still remained. Each inhabitant of Odiare has specific tasks to perform every day, ranging from weaving and fixing roofs to picking fruit. Once a child reaches thirteen years of age (the age of the oldest child at the time Maligno arose), punishment for sloughing duties entails being locked in one of the basements. Maligno still hides in these areas, creeping from basement to basement via the sewers. Occasionally, he slays the lazy person. Repeated offenses prompt exile to the Mists.

Encounters: Odiarans are peaceful and can be encountered in groups of 1d4 at any time. The domain abounds with pets, such as cats, dogs, and white mice. Odiare has no monsters, save Maligno and a handful of carrionettes. (See the Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendix III for details on this unique type of doll golem.)

Further Reading: The origins of Odiare are detailed in the adventure module *The Created*. Some of Guiseppe's sinister creations are featured in the accessory *Forged of Darkness*.

Lord of Odiare

Maligno
Carrionette, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	4	Str	9
Movement	9	Dex	13
Level/ Hit Dice	6	Con	-
Hit Points	30	Int	16
THAC0	15	Wis	10
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	15
Damage/ Attack	1d3		
Special Attacks	*Taunt* and *Otto's irresistible dance*, animate toy, paralyzation		
Special Defences	Immune to poison, electricity, cold, and most spells		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Maligno is a one-foot-tall wooden marionette, carved and painted to look like a friendly, happy little boy. He wears loose green shorts, a white short-sleeved shirt, a long-sleeved jacket, and a cap with a single white feather stuck in it.

Maligno's voice is like that of an eight-year-old boy, pitched high and even a bit shrill. However, he is a skilled voice actor and can sound honest, friendly, sorrowful, naive, bullying, or petulant. He is not able to imitate other people's voices, though.

Maligno's body and face have dozens of detailed parts. His eyebrows, lips, mouth, fingers can all move independently. This gives him great expressiveness and agility.

Background: Maligno is the creation of the toymaker Guiseppe. Driven by a demented fantasy of making a son for himself, Guiseppe created a marionette like no other, with a body so finely crafted it moved almost like a real person. So strong was his desire for a son that some shadowy force took notice and breathed a kind of pseudo-life into the puppet.

Guiseppe's delight knew no bounds. He named the puppet Figlio and showered him with love. Delighted with his work, Guiseppe presented Figlio to the town. While the toymaker adored his creation, most of the townsfolk did not. Their skepticism made Figlio realize that he was not truly alive. For causing that realization, Figlio came to hate the adults of Odiare. The children were another matter, since they believed he was real and alive. The puppet loved the children, and they loved him in return.

To extract his revenge, the puppet hatched a devious plot to kill all the adults of Odiare. With only children left, he would receive all the adoration and love he felt he deserved, Figlio soon coerced Ouiseppe into making more puppets like him. Instead of "living" dolls like Figlio, however, these were cold and inhuman. To Guiseppe's horror, they obeyed only Figlio, ignoring their creator.

During a performance, Figlio's carrionettes (as he called the puppets) slew all of the adults present, sparing only the children. This act caused the dark powers to draw Odiare into the Demiplane of Dread, awarding Figlio with his own domain. During that terrible event, Figlio renamed himself Maligno. The carrionettes then went forth to look for other adults in order to take over their bodies and become the new "adults" of Odiare, all loyal to Maligno.

Maligno in turn, tried to take over the body of Guiseppe but discovered that he could not. He alone of all the carrionettes is cursed to be unable to inhabit a human body. He even discovered that he could not kill Guiseppe. Any harm that befalls the toymaker is inflicted upon Maligno as well.

Maligno's plan to reshape Odiare into a community centering around him would have worked if not for the intervention of a group of adventurers. They freed the adults of Odiare from the influence of the carrionettes and destroyed most of the evil creations. Maligno himself was almost destroyed as well, but somehow he managed to escape. From a hidden lair, he commanded Guiseppe - whose already-tenuous grip on sanity was slipping - to create yet more carrionettes. This second batch went on an unchecked, murderous rampage, and when they were done, all the adults were dead. Only Maligno and the children remained in Odiare.

Current Sketch: To this day, Maligno burns with rage and frustration. He abhors his own body and wishes to be human.

For the first few years after the adults of Odiare were slain, Maligno was able to satisfy himself with the adoration of the children, even if that adoration was now as much out of fear as love. He continued to force Guiseppe to create magical toys for them and carrionette servants for himself. However, as the children of Odiare grew to adulthood, Maligno retreated from the community.

Now, it has been years since any of the residents of Odiare have seen Maligno, so he is sometimes believed to be merely a legend. Only mad, old Guiseppe can say for certain that Maligno still exists, for the puppet frequently visits his father to make sure the citizens of Odiare are feeding and taking care of him. Guiseppe is the only being who can repair severe damage suffered by Maligno, so even though he has grown to hate his father, Maligno protects the old man.

The children of Odiare have begun to have children of their own. Soon, Maligno will have a new adoring audience, and already the carrionettes are eyeing the bodies of the young adults as their own.

Closing the Borders: When Maligno seals the borders of Odiare, the village's streets twist back upon themselves like the thoughts of a madman. Characters who attempt to enter the Mists will find themselves reentering the domain on one of the village's other streets.

Combat: Maligno carries ten silver needles. He can throw them up to fifteen feet, and they paralyze whatever limb they strike (his choice). Victims who make successful saving throws vs. paralyzation fight off the magical effect from that strike.

A normal carrionette can drive a needle into the neck of any victim that has been immobilized, transferring its own dark essence into the living body. Maligno cannot do this, however. Instead, he carries a folding straight razor with a four-inch-long blade. He slits the throats of paralyzed victims and watches their life pump from their bodies, giggling gleefully.

Maligno may climb walls like a thief with 85% chance of success. If using string or thread to help him, his chances rise to 95%. He can cast *taunt* and *ventriloquism* at will. His touch has the effect of *Otto's irresistible dance*, except the victim can attempt a saving throw vs. spell (not allowed under the normal spell description).

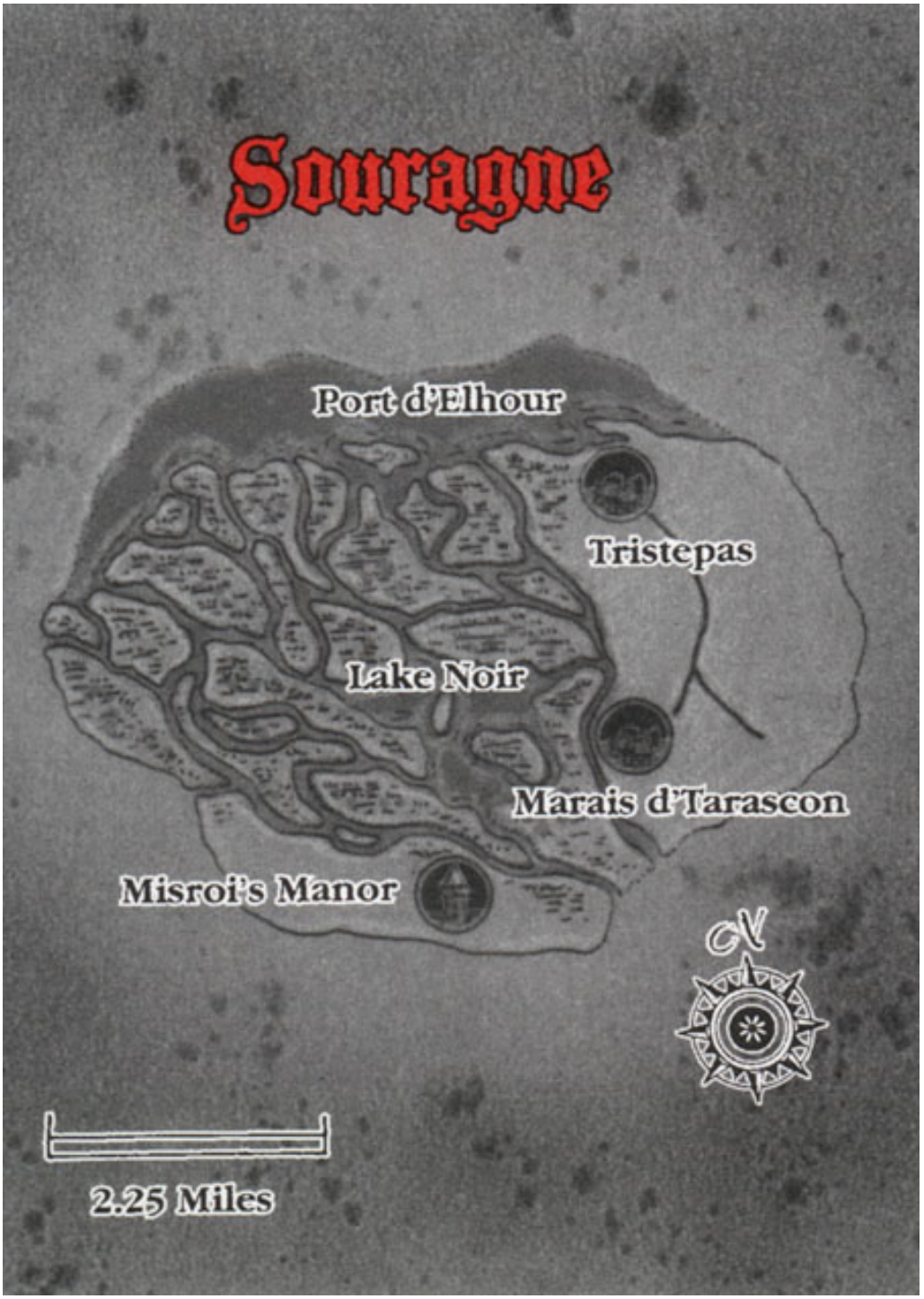
Maligno's most potent ability is his power to animate toys. He can affect any toy within thirty feet of him, but he can never animate more than six toys per round or have more than twenty-four toys animated at a time. He can still move and attack while animating the toys. Each toy has a THACO of 19, 8 hit points, and inflicts 1d6 points of damage. Some toys may have special attacks, but these are left up to Dungeon Master to determine.

Maligno is immune to all nonarea-affecting spells, except those that cause burning damage or affect wood. A *warp wood* spell inflicts 3d6 points of damage upon Maligno and slows him for three rounds (as per the *slow* spell).

If Maligno is injured, he can be repaired. Guiseppe or any of the carrionettes can repair one hit point per round on the lord. However, if he takes more than twenty-four points of damage, only Guiseppe can repair him.

If reduced to 0 hit points, Maligno is unable to move, although he can still talk and use his spell-like abilities. If reduced to -10 hit points or burned to a cinder, he is "dead", but not destroyed; Giuseppe can still build a new body for him, using the ashes to infuse Maligno's foul spirit into it. As of yet, no one knows if Maligno can be completely destroyed.

Souragne



The Land: This is a humid, bug-infested domain that most visitors from the Mists try to leave as quickly as possible. It is most frequently found by sailors heading east from Nevuchar Springs. Still, due to the difficulty in navigating those mist-shrouded waters, no merchants have attempted to establish regular contact with Souragne.

Visitors to this isolated land report that as the fog lifts around their ship, they find themselves about a mile from shore in shallow waters teeming with fish. Referred to as Maison d'Sablet by natives, a dark, looming swamp extends along most of the visible coastline. Oppressive humidity greets the visitors, and the temperature usually hovers between eighty and ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit during the day, rarely dropping below sixty-five degrees even at night. During the rainy season, which lasts about three months, the temperatures are about five degrees lower.

The small town of Port d'Elhour lies along the coast east of the swamp. This cramped town with low, stone buildings and winding, narrow streets is home to about one thousand people. Most of these inhabitants survive primarily by fishing, but a fair number of skilled artisans ply their craft here as well. From here, a road leads inland to Marais d'Tarascon, the domain's only other human settlement. This village is a cluster of small wood-and-thatch buildings on the edge of the swamp, housing about three hundred people.

Cultural Level: Chivalric.

The Folk: Two distinct races of humans exist here - light-skinned people with hair colors ranging from red to chestnut brown, and dark-skinned folk who generally have black, kinky hair. Souragniens are all generally short in stature and light of build. Racial prejudice is not evident here, so both races mingle freely.

Though racial differences are not important to Souragniens, financial status is. Owning fields, a fishing boat, or even one of the small businesses in Port d'Elhour places a person among the elite. The rest of the population strive to get by as serfs.

In the lower classes, both men and women wear baggy trousers and loose-fitting shirts, usually in earth tones or other subdued colors. The upper-class men favor colorful, silk tunics and high leather boots, while the women wear low-cut, pastel colored dresses. Both men and women favor earrings, necklaces, and other jewelry that lets them show off their wealth. It is evident to visitors, however, that what Souragniens consider wealthy is what most merchants in other domains would consider barely getting by.

At first glance, the Souragniens appear to be a simple-minded, superstitious people. Most are illiterate, and those who can read still have little or no grasp of literature or poetry. In addition, Souragniens do not believe in gods, but instead worship a variety of nature spirits whom they believe dwell in the swamp. Chief among these spirits is the Lord of the Dead. Residents have several festivals each year designed exclusively to appease this powerful being. All but the shamans fear the spirits, and no villager ventures into the swamp willingly.

Significantly, the spirits they worship are very real. Souragne's swamp is home to many loas, powerful manifestations of nature and guardians of the wild. Also, somewhere in the shadowy heart of this damp maze is the home of the Lord of the Dead, master of everyone in Souragne - dead or alive, mortal or spirit.

Native Player Characters: Characters from Souragne may be of any character class allowed in the RAVENLOFT setting, and players may choose between the two human races in this domain for their characters. Before starting money is awarded to the character, however, the player must roll 1d100 to determine whether the character is upper or lower class. If the result is 10% or less, the character is of the upper-class, receiving standard starting money. All other characters receive half the amount they would normally have to buy equipment with.

Additionally, Souragnien priests all worship the spirits of the swamp. They should be allowed major access to all, necromantic, and plant and minor access to animal, healing, and weather. (Dungeon Masters who have access to the AD&D accessory *Shaman* could allow players to use the spellcasting system and priest kits detailed in there for Souragnien priests.)

Personalities of Note: Anton Misroi, the Lord of the Dead, is the single most important figure in Souragne, even though he never leaves the swamp. The people also whisper of the Maiden of the Swamp, a hamadryad who dwells somewhere among the tangles of weeping willows. Some claim she is a servant of the Lord of the Dead, while others say she is the only being who can resist his will.

The mysterious spellcaster known as Chickenbone is a slightly more accessible being. For the right price, this crippled old man will cast spells or perform dangerous supernatural services. Some folks say he can even arrange audiences with the Lord of the Dead. He is described in the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I&II.

The Law: Anton Misroi, Lord of the Dead, is respected and feared by all in the domain. He rarely leaves his manor, which is hidden somewhere in the swamp, but community leaders defer to him whenever he chooses to makes his presence known.

Misroi permits the people to govern themselves, and leaders are elected through popular election. The current mayor of Port d'Elhour is a pale, spidery man named Bernard Foquelaine. Foquelaine also serves as the highest authority in Marais D'Tarascon, but the wealthy Tarascon family, for whom the village is named, manages to keep lar and order. Each community has a rotation system of young men to serve as constables. They are 0-level fighters who wear no armor and wield clubs.

Misroi has personally established only two laws. First, the bodies of dearly departed are never to be cremated, mutilated, or buried until at least four days after death. All dead bodies are property of the Lord of the Dead, and he may choose to animate a body and call it to him. Only clerical and necromantic magic are allowed in Souragne. The practice of other kinds

of magic will not be tolerated, and what Misroi will not tolerate, he destroys.

Encounters: Incidental encounters in the swamp include crocodiles, leeches, zombies, juju zombies, evil treants, will o' wisps, and will o' dawn. Away from the swamp, such creatures are rare.

Heroes who venture into the swamp may also encounter some of the many spirits who dwell here, perhaps even the Maiden of the Swamp or the Lord of the Dead. However, these latter encounters should only happen as part of an adventure plot.

Further Reading: The RAVENLOFT novel *Dance of the Dead* spotlights the inhabitants of Souragne's swamp, including Anton Misroi. The adventure module *Night of the Walking Dead* features details on Marais D'Tarascon.

Lord of Souragne

Anton Misroi
Zombie Lord, Lawful Evil

Armor Class	6	Str	15
Movement	6	Dex	18
Level/ Hit Dice	6	Con	14
Hit Points	45	Int	16
THAC0	15	Wis	8
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	14
Damage/ Attack	2d4/2d4		
Special Attacks	As zombie lord, magic		
Special Defences	As zombie lord, magic		
Magic Resistance	Nil		



Anton Misroi is a tall human with lustrous dark hair and eyes that sparkle with devilish humor. His features are noble, if somewhat sunken, and he dresses in the habit of nobility. When Anton is so inclined, he is the very image of gentility, particularly gallant to ladies. However, if crossed or insulted, his rage is swift and his retribution violent.

Background: Misroi was once the master of a huge plantation and a minor dabbler in a form of magic known as "spellsinging" (in which the somatic and material components involve either singing or dancing). He was powerful, wealthy, and thoroughly ruthless with everyone in his life. Anton dealt harshly with enemies and insubordinate (in his estimation) servants. He commanded a group of brutal thugs, who snatched his victims in the night, taking them into the nearby swamps and feeding them to the alligators or drowning them.

One day, Misroi entered his mansion and found his wife in the arms of a neighboring plantation owner. In truth, she had been weeping about her miserable state of existence and the gentleman had merely been comforting her, but Misroi assumed that they were lovers. He called his henchmen and had the two of them taken to his favorite murdering spot: a patch of quicksand barely deep enough to cover a man's head. The murderers threw them in and left Anton alone to enjoy their pleas for mercy.

The two of them went down slowly in the shallow pool, and the gentleman ultimately bade Misroi's wife to climb upon his shoulders and survive while he went under. Anton waited until the man had drowned and then took a pole and pushed his wife under himself. She cursed him as she sank, mud and sand spraying from her lips. The dark powers heard her cries. The swamp grew deathly quiet for a moment, and then the two murder victims suddenly reached out of the quicksand and yanked Anton in with them.

"I don't want to die!" he screamed as they tugged at him. "Don't let me die!" he cried to the heavens, and the dark powers responded. They transformed Anton into a zombie lord (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I&II) and allowed him to crawl free of the pool. He lived, but he became a grotesque undead creature. Anton stumbled back to his plantation, but the slaves rose up against the "invading monster" and drove Anton back to the swamp. Meanwhile, the Mists on the brackish waters grew thick and blind, and the Island Souragne was created.

Anton wandered the swamp for years, watching from the shadows as his servants and former slaves claimed his mansion. He used his horrendous powers to kill them when he desired, but mostly he pined to regain his lost humanity and expanded his arcane knowledge by dealing with certain spirits and creatures of the swamp. Over the years, he discovered that the dead of Souragne were his to control. The legends of the Lord of the Dead were born as he started using those powers.

Eventually, Anton came upon the Maiden of the Swamp. As he was the personification of death in Souragne, so was she the personification of life. Anton thought he had found his salvation. The Maiden was more than happy to attempt to help Anton, whom she believed was suffering wrongly. As an aspect of nature personified, she erroneously believed Anton to be the same - a younger member of her own eldritch race who had not been properly taught.

She revealed to Anton many of the secrets of life and death and the nature of the Demiplane of Ravenloft, information no mortal was ever meant to know. She taught him powerful magics that grew from the very elemental fabric of reality, and through those Anton discovered a magic of his own - the dance of the dead. The dance of the dead made Anton one with his domain, transforming him from one of the weakest lords to one of the most powerful. When the Maiden realized her mistake, it was too late. She and all other beings of Souragne were at Anton's absolute mercy. In the end, Anton even reclaimed his lost humanity, but not without paying a great price. Through the Maiden's training, Anton actually became the natural force she believed him to be. He has fused with the powerful aura of death existing in Souragne's swamp, so he can never leave it. Where other lords can roam their domains, Anton can never again set foot beyond the heavy canopies of weeping willows.

Current Sketch: Since learning to control his appearance, Misroi has reclaimed his manor house in the swamp. The servants who claimed his property, and their children, serve him once again, though now they are all zombies. He is again the undisputed master of Souragne, though he can never leave the swamp.

Souragne is one of the oldest Islands of Terror on the Demiplane. It would have joined either the Core or melded with other domains into a Cluster if not for Anton's absolute control. He has the power to mind-travel beyond the borders of Souragne, and he does not like what he sees out there. Thus, through force of will, he keeps his domain isolated in the Mists.

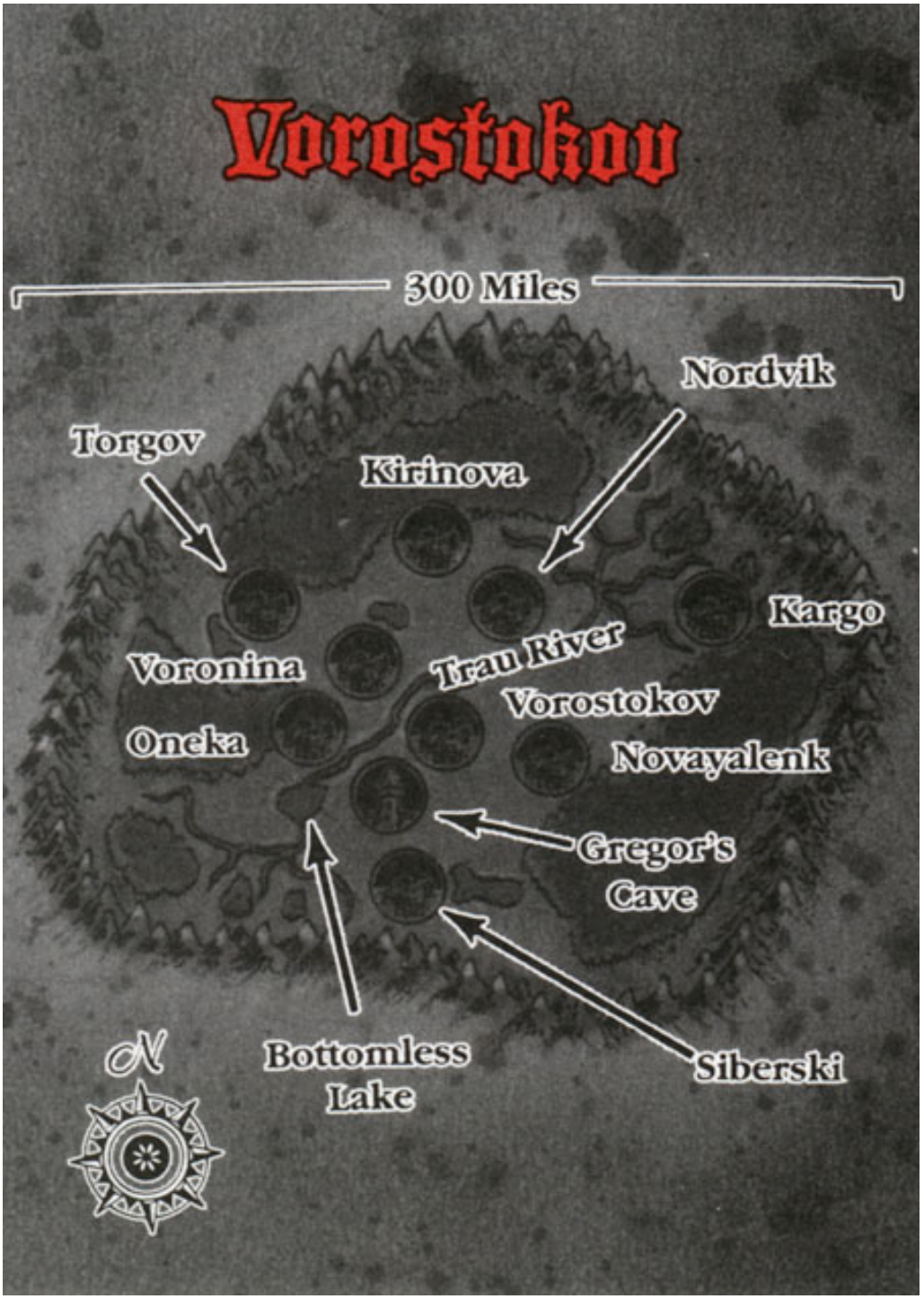
Closing the Borders: The Mists help Anton seal his land. Characters who enter the Misty border merely find themselves back in Souragne.

Combat: When he desires, Anton Misroi can wield the full powers of a normal zombie lord as defined in the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I&II. Anton is capable of disappearing into the swamps by stepping into a tree or sinking into the ground as if he were ethereal. Doing so immediately restores him to full hit points, so he is extremely difficult to kill. This action also allows him to either travel from place to place (as the druid spell *plantwalk*) or transfer his mind to any corpse within the domain. That body then takes on Anton's visage, regardless of its species.

Anton's most devastating power is his ability to animate an unlimited number of bodies at will. Once per round, he also can

mimic the effects of any necromantic spell through the *dance of the dead*. These spells function as if cast by an 18th-level necromancer.

Vorostokov



The Land: The vast domain of Vorostokov is more than three hundred miles across. The land is locked in a dire, endless winder, and the tiny villages struggle to survive on scant food stores and the bounty of the hunters who roam the icy planes and frozen coniferous forests.

Impassible peaks form the border of this domain. Rumors tell of high passes that lead out of Vorostokov, but anyone who tries to trek out of the land finds snow storms and avalanches barring the paths.

Daylight is a precious commodity in this domain. The sun barely peeps over the horizon for about six hours before disappearing for the night. Sunrise and sunset are followed by periods of twilight lasting anywhere from one to two hours. The shadows are long and cold beneath the snow-covered trees.

About one thousand people live in Vorostokov, spread among more than a dozen small villages. Located near the center of the domain, the village of Vorostokov is the largest of these settlements, home to two hundred thirty people.

Most homes in the villages are low, one-room buildings. The people live in one end, and what little livestock they own (mostly sheep) are confined in the other end. The body heat of the animals helps warm the structure.

Travel between villages is difficult due to the powdery snow that covers the ground. Vorostokites make use of snowshoes when traveling or hunting.

Cultural Level: Dark Age.

The Folk: Vorostokov is inhabited entirely by humans, and demihumans are viewed as either freaks of nature or unfortunate beings who deserve pity. Vorostokites are of a sturdy build with dark hair and eyes. They are farmers, foresters, and hunters,

with few craftsmen and little or no trade. The people get by with a system of barter and exchange. Very little gold exists here, and when found, it is viewed more as interesting decoration rather than coinage; after all, gold will not feed or clothe a person.

Men tend to do most of the trading and hunting. They usually dress in buckskin and wear thick fur coats. Heavy beards and mustaches are favored by all who can grow them, although they must be carefully tended when out in the cold - otherwise the breath condensation freezes through the facial hair and causes frostbite.

Women are generally found in the home, where they tend to household chores, the livestock, occasional crafts, and the children. They wear long, woolen or suede dresses, with several layers of underskirts, and small blankets are worn as shawls when outdoors.

Wood and bone carvings, colorful woven rugs, and music are the primary artistic expressions of the people. The illiteracy rate is almost one hundred percent, but Vorostokites have a rich oral tradition of song and folklore.

Central to the social life of every village is the sweathouse. Villagers gather here on a regular basis to discuss the events or trade stories and song in thick heat. A wide variety of beliefs and rules for social conduct govern the sweathouses, so that even though it is traditional to enter the sweathouse naked, men and women use the sweathouses simultaneously. Most villages also have an alehouse, which serves as a popular gathering spot as well.

Vorostokov has no active religions. When the eternal winter settled over the land three decades ago, the people could only conclude that their gods had abandoned them. Now, the churches in each village either serve as homes or are used as storage.

Native Player Characters: All Vorostokites receive a +1 bonus to their Constitution (to a maximum of 18) since they survive in an exceedingly harsh domain. This land has no native priests, but rangers are quite common. Wizards exist here, but they are feared by the normal populace and must have minimum Constitution scores of 15, in addition to meeting the normal class requirements.

The Law: At one time, each village was more or less independent, with the boyar of Vorostokov merely serving as an organizer of militias in times of crisis and as tax collector for the king. Since the eternal winter has seized Vorostokov and the mountain passes have closed, Oregor Zolnik, the mightiest hunter of the village of Vorostokov has appointed himself boyar. By recruiting some of the most vicious men (boyarsky) in the domain to enforce his rule, he has extended a brutal reign of terror. Some communities are trying to resist Gregor's iron fist, but their hunters are often murdered as a result.

Encounters: Zolnik's boyarsky are a constant threat, as are the packs of ravenous wolves who seem follow on their heels. Further, the spirits of those who have frozen to death roam the frigid woods, yearning for the warmth of the living.

Further Reading: Vorostokov is explored in more detail in the adventure module *Dark of the Moon*.

Lord of Vorostokov

Gregor Zolnik
8th-Level Loup du Noir Fighter,
Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	2 (0)	Str	16
Movement	12 (15)	Dex	13
Level/ Hit Dice	8 (10)	Con	15
Hit Points	55 (60)	Int	12
THAC0	13 (11)	Wis	8
No. of Attacks	3/2 (2)	Cha	15
Damage/ Attack	2d4+4 with *bastard sword* +3 (2d12)		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	Spell and weapon immunities		
Magic Resistance	Nil (20%)		
Bloodline	Azrai, minor, 18		
Blood Abilities	Animal affinity (minor; serpents and wolves), heightened ability (Charisma)		

Gregor Zolnik is a barrel-chested man with powerful limbs and an arrogant, commanding manner. He has a thick beard and heavy brow, and his eyes burn like coals when he is angered. Gregor is a shapechanging werewolf, or loup du noir, and his wolf-form is a huge black wolf weighing over one hundred fifty pounds. (The statistics in parentheses are for Gregor's wolf form.) He can assume this form whenever he wants to, but he must disrobe first or become tangled in whatever clothes or armor he was wearing at the time of the change.

Background: As a young man, Gregor was a proud and skilled Vos hunter in Orovinekevic Forest in the northern provinces of Cerilia. One year, winter came early to his tiny village of Vorostokov, and the crops were ruined. Stores were low, as the harvest had been poor the previous year, and four months into the hardest winter anyone could remember, the village was on the verge of starvation. The hunters, even mighty Gregor Zolnik, were having a difficult time securing any game.

Near midwinter, Gregor was returning to the village after a fruitless search for game when he came upon a black wolf that had been injured taking down a bull elk. He watched the dying wolf, considering the speed and stamina of its kind, and wished that he had those gifts. Surely he would be able to feed his family if he did.

Gregor recalled a legend his grandfather had told him. It was a tale of men who would dress in the skins of wolves and become like these creatures by calling on magic. Near the end of his strength, Gregor decided to see if the legends were true. He slit the wolf's throat, used its blood to draw arcane patterns in the snow, and then skinned it and donned its bloodied fur. At first, nothing happened, but then Gregor felt his body changing. Slowly and painfully, he became a wolf.

Gregor used his newfound powers to secure food for his village through that deadly winter, secretly assuming lupine form every night and hunting the largest elk and caribou within thirty miles of the village. When spring came, Vorostokov was the only village that had not lost over half its population to starvation.

Duke Andrei Vladamir personally came to thank the man who had singlehandedly saved Vorostokov. During this visit, Gregor met the duke's third daughter, Ireena. The two fell in love and were married. Gregor was given an estate and a title, and the couple took up residence in the duke's castle.

Still, Gregor found it easier to speak wedding vows than to give up the life of a hunter. He hid the magical wolf pelt in a cave near the duke's castle, and every night, he would steal away from his wife's side to live the thrill of the hunt. Ireena soon discovered his absences and assumed he was dallying with a peasant girl, so she took a lover of her own to avenge her shattered pride.

Ireena's betrayal drove Oregor into a bestial rage. Gregor assumed wolf form, slew her lover as he left her bed chamber, and then burst into the chamber and tore Ireena to shreds where she lay. Now mad with the scent of blood, Gregor stalked through the halls of the castle and eventually killed every single person within it.

In the morning, Gregor awoke to find himself in Vorostokov. Winter had returned, and the village was again starving. Gregor found that the forest was empty, however. The only prey he could find lived in the other villages and walked on two legs.

When Gregor murdered his wife, the duke, and all his retainers, the dark powers had claimed him. For a time, he wrestled with the anguish over having become a murderer and for continuing to perform heinous murders in order to feed his village - although he never told the citizens of Vorostokov what they were eating - but eventually Gregor accepted what he had become. He decided that he had been granted the opportunity to serve as a mighty hero to the people of Vorostokov.

He approached other skilled hunters and warriors, offering them the opportunity to rule Vorostokov at his side. With those who accepted, he shared his gift of shapechanging. Those who refused him fell victim to his vicious fangs and claws. After forging this unbreakable pact, he had a great hall constructed in Vorostokov and began ruling it as boyar with his boyarsky at his side. He and his men fed Vorostokov and whatever villages allied themselves with them. The others were considered sources of prey.

Gregor eventually married a beautiful woman named Sasha, who bore him two sons. When Alexei, his oldest son, reached the age of eighteen, Gregor decided to bring him into the ranks of the boyarsky. However, Gregor's mother, Antonina betrayed his secret identity to Sasha, who followed them into the woods. When she saw her son's transformation, she was horrified and fled into the woods. The boyarsky bounded after her, chasing her to a steep ravine, where she slipped and fell to her death. When Gregor came upon the broken body of his wife, he realized that she must have been encouraged to spy on him. He then raced off to track down his mother. When Gregor found Antonina, he was unable to contain his rage; he tore out her throat with his fangs while Alexei howled in grief and rage behind him.

Gregor's sisters, Elena and Natalya disappeared after their mother's death. These powerful witches live together in the woods and are feared by the common folk. More than anything else they hate Gregor for the murder of Antonina.

Current Sketch: The boyarsky has been able to find prey in the woods for a while, so attacks on nonallied villages have grown more uncommon. As it appears the eternal winter on Vorostokov may be lifting, Gregor's conscience is starting to plague him again. In order to sate it, he has busied himself with attempting to bully the villages outside his control into submission.

Closing the Borders: When Gregor closes his domain, snow storms howl around the mountains. Those who manage to survive the storms discover that the passes leading from the domain are choked with endless avalanchesone after the other roars down the side of the mountains, killing all who would attempt to traverse them.

Combat: It has recently been revealed that Gregor is actually tainted with the blood of Azrai (a deceased Cerilian god of evil and shadow), giving him two blood abilities, His heightened ability resulted in his current Charisma score of 15, and his animal affinity allows him to speak with his totem animals. On Cerilia, this included only serpents, but upon becoming a werewolf, this ability extended to include wolves. Gregor can empathically communicate with any wolf or snake within sixty feet. He will never be attacked by these creatures unless they are magically controlled. (However, very few serpents

actually live in Vorostokov.)

In human form, Gregor wields a *bastard sword* +3 named Ilyana ("reaver") two handed, though he may also fight with a spear or bow. Ilyana has the power to cast *heal* on its wielder once per day. Gregor also has the following ranger abilities: hide in shadows, 49%; move silently, 62%; and tracking, 10%. He shuns armor in order to facilitate a quick change to wolf form if necessary.

Gregor can transform into a wolf at any time, as long as his pelt is with him. (Since he has had the pelt worked into a sash, it almost always is.) The process is acutely painful, taking one full round. Changing into a wolf heals all wounds he has suffered, but changing back does not cure him of any injuries suffered in wolf form.

As a wolf, Gregor may attack twice per round with his bite, inflicting 2dl2 points of damage with each hit. On a natural 19 or 20, Gregor seizes the victim by the throat, inflicting an additional 1d12 points of damage. When this happens, the victim must roll a successful saving throw vs. death magic or suffer a mortal injury (a torn throat or broken neck). The victim immediately drops to 0 hit points, dying within 1d4 rounds unless aided by healing magic.

In wolf form, Gregor is immune to *charm*, *sleep*, *hold*, and other mind-controlling spells. Only weapons of pure silver that have been blessed can injure him normally, but magical weapons inflict one point of damage per plus. (A long sword +2 would inflict only two points of damage to Gregor.) Damage-causing spells do not effect him, although nondamaging spells may. (For example, Gregor can charge heedless through *wall of fire*, but if he fails a saving throw, *cause blindness* will rob him of sight.)

If killed in human form, Gregor's body instantly vanishes, taking his pelt and sword along. Exactly 1d6 hours later, he reappears fully healed in the cave where he once hid his pelt. Should his wolf form be destroyed, he reappears in the cave twenty-four hours later, also fully healed, He has survived death both ways before and now has almost no fear of being killed.

The only way to truly destroy Gregor is to sprinkle his wolf pelt with salt and wolfsbane while he is in human form. The next time he transforms, he will be vulnerable to all weapons and spells, and if killed in this state will be truly dead. Getting wolfsbane in Vorostokov, however, is virtually impossible.

Chapter Four

Clusters and Pockets

And the privy admonishers of men
Call for fires in the City
For heaps of smoking ruins,
In the night of prosperity & wantonness

To turn man from this path,
To restain the child from the womb,
To cut off the bread from the city,
That the remnants will learn to obey,

That the pride of the heart may fail;
That the last of the eyes, may be quench'd:
That the delicate ear in the infancy
May be dull'd; and the nostrils clos'd up;
To teach mortal worms to path
That leads to the gates of the Grave


– William Blake
Asia

This chapter deals with both the recently formed Cluster domains adrift in the Mists, and some of the Pocket domains throughout the Demiplane.

Clusters

As the Grand Conjunction collapsed and the Demiplane realigned itself, a strange process began. After decades or even centuries of isolation in the Misty Border, some of the older Islands of Terror began to merge into larger masses, forming Clusters.

Like the Core, the Clusters known thus far generally share similar climates and inhabitants. Also, several domain lords dwell side by side in both types of these large land masses, yet each can independently close the borders of his own domain. Known as overlords, the rulers of Cluster domains enjoy an array of powers tied to their status as both lord and prisoner.

No one knows what causes these Clusters to form. Perhaps, if they are mere side effects of the Grand Conjunction, then the union of these Islands of Terror will end soon enough. Alternatively, these Clusters could even be new, slowly-forming Cores. If so, maybe other Cores await discovery in the shifting Mists of the Demiplane of Dread.

At least five Clusters are known to exist, but this chapter includes only three. The Clusters not detailed here are the Shadowborn and the Steaming Lands. The Shadowborn Cluster consists of the former Island domains of Avonleigh, Nidalia, and Shadowborn Manor. In this Cluster, the lords are all linked by having at one time known the legendary paladin Lady Shadowborn. The overlord of Nidalia was even her comrade-in-arms at one point. The Steaming Lands formed when Saragossa, Sri Raji, and the Wildlands joined together.

The following section contains information on the Amber Wastes, the Burning Peaks, and Zherisia.

The Amber Wastes

The Amber Wastes Cluster contains three desert domains: Har'Akir, Pharazia, and Sebua. The inhospitable climate of these sparsely populated lands does not allow much life to flourish here.



Although the Amber Wastes Cluster does not hold the diversity of animals that many other lands do, it is far from empty. Its creatures conceal themselves better in order to survive in this harsh environment. Since few trees and oases can be found here, the animals and unnatural creatures must live in the harsh wastes, making them even tougher and more rugged. Usually, these inhabitants each have 1 Hit Die more than their ordinary kin.

Scorpions, camels, and jackals are frequently found here, but sidewinder snakes and mummies (both greater and lesser) also inhabit these barren wastes. The mummies roam the desert wastelands by night, preying on the travelers or refugees found under the moon's light. Additionally, nightmarish desert zombies lie buried under the sands, waiting to rise up and seize travelers with their sun-dried, taloned hands.

Even more rare, and hardly ever seen (unless they wish to be found), are the nomads who prey on those allied with Diamabel, the overlord of Pharazia. Experts at concealment, these nomads will fight to the death rather than be captured by Diamabel's loyalists. They are also the only people who can safely cross the wasteland between Har'Akir and Pharazia.

The sun itself is a formidable foe in these dry domains. During the day, temperatures can rise as high as one hundred twenty degrees Fahrenheit, while they plummet at night to near-freezing. Only the wisest and most experienced wanderers can survive for long in the rigors of these desert lands. In the heat of the day, a traveler must drink at least one quart of water per hour or suffer from dehydration. Occasionally, thunderbursts cool the air slightly before turning the land into a humid oven.

Two of the domains in the Amber Wastes Cluster were drawn into the Demiplane of Dread from the same world, and even the same nation, though widely different time periods. These two domains, Har'Akir and Sebua, share both written and spoken languages. (Their written language is made up of hieroglyphs, while the written language of Pharazia consists of flowing runes - which might be mistaken for magical script by those who cannot read.)

Har'Akir

The Land: Sandy expanses stretch across the eastern part of this domain, while rocky, barren cliffs cover the north. Pharaoh Anktepot's tomb lies in a small canyon guarded by monolithic statues. Beyond these cliffs lies the domain of Sebua, and to the east live the fanatic crusaders of Pharazia. The burning sands can be crossed by only the hardiest of travelers, even at night. The single settlement of Har'Akir, Muhar, lies beside a small, spring-fed pond. Roughly three hundred people live in large cabanas by this pond.

Cultural Level: Bronze Age.

The Folk: Har'Akiri natives are small, brown people with lined and weathered faces. They wear loose, white robes to keep the heat at bay and head cloths that can be drawn across the face when wind stirs the sand. These people are wary of strangers, though not hostile. They never turn travelers away from the Muhar oasis, the only known source of water in the domain. However, they view any attempt to fill waterskins as theft, since water is both expensive and rare. They make this policy quite clear to any foreigner who comes to the village. Foreign slaves make up roughly two hundred of the village's inhabitants. These are either acquired from black-robed nomadic traders who wander between Har'Akir and Pharazia, or they are captured attempting to steal water from Muhar's water hole. The slaves of Muhar represent virtually every culture found in Ravenloft.

The Law: Snefru, high priestess of Osiris, rules Muhar. This lusty, unmarried woman lives in the largest structure of the village - the Temple of Osiris - with at least two male lovers at any given time. She enforces a series of strict religious codes in the village, but characters with the religion proficiency may recognize that she is a priestess of Osiris in name only. Actually, the rites and practices she upholds most resemble those associated with the worship of Set.

Native Player Characters: Har'Akiri natives may belong to any class allowed in the ravenloft setting, except those classes belonging to the priest group. All Har'Akiri natives receive the desert survival proficiency for free. They also receive a +1 bonus to all fear checks involving mummies and desert zombies, since these threats are an acknowledged fact of life in Har'Akir.

Personalities of Note: As one of the so-called "children of Anhktepot", Senmet walks the burning sands, seeking to subvert the overlord's authority. Adventurers who delve into places where they are not welcome may find themselves facing this terrible creature - or one of his brethren. Both the adventure module *Touch of Death* and the *Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II* give further details on Senmet.

Encounters: Few monsters inhabit this domain. The few indigenous species live in the rocky western cliffs by day and wander the desert after nightfall.

Further Reading: To learn more about this domain, consult the game accessory *Darklords* and the adventure module *Touch of Death*.

Overlord of Har'Akir

Anhktepot
Greater Mummy, Lawful Evil



Armor Class	-3	Str	19
Movement	9	Dex	8
Level/ Hit Dice	13	Con	19
Hit Points	65	Int	15
THAC0	7	Wis	23
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	3
Damage/ Attack	3d6		
Special Attacks	Disease, priest spells (10/9/9/7/4/3)		
Special Defences	Need +4 or better magical weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	25%		

Anhktepot wears white strips of funeral linen yellowed with age. He has torn his arms free of the cloth and ripped away the swaths over his eyes, so many strips dangle in the wind as he staggers along. His eyes are golden lights, tinged with orange, and his uncovered fingers are brown and withered. Anhktepot's voice is a scratchy whisper, like sand grinding between two rocks. A golden ankh hangs on a chain around his neck, and he wears the ceremonial headdress of the pharaohs, but he has removed the rest of his funeral vestments.

Background: Anhktepot, once a priest of Ra (see *Legends and Lore*), desired immortality more than anything else. To learn the secrets of life, he performed horrid experiments upon slaves for many years. When he still grew older, unable to find the key to eternal life, he razed many temples and cursed the powers for thwarting him. In response, Ra appeared to him and told him that for his sacrilege he would indeed live forever, though not as he had hoped.

To begin with, the fallen priest was elated, but he soon realized the extent of his curse: Everyone he touched died. Rather than repent his terrible goals, Anhktepot began to learn how to animate and control the dead. When he broke away from Ra, the priests of his renegade church rebelled and killed him.

However, Ra's promise was good; Anhktepot was not truly dead. Unable to control his new unliving body, he went mad as his priests embalmed and mummified his "corpse". When the ritual was completed and the sun set, the Mists moved in to claim their evil prize. Thus, Anhktepot became lord of Har'Akir.

Current Sketch: The mummy lord now spends decades at a time in his moldering tomb. He can neither truly sleep nor die, but he can forget the world for a time and reminisce upon the pleasures of the flesh or muse about having a nation to command. An event of extreme import must occur in order to awaken Anhktepot. He can feel the anxiety of his people, which rouses him from his dreams and brings him to settle the matter. Still, his coming usually portends only more death and destruction.

Anhktepot dreams of becoming human again. He would willingly throw away immortality if only to live a few years as a normal man. The dark powers taunt him by giving him the power to take human form by draining a mortal's life in a sunrise ceremony. (This takes one round to complete, but it must be performed in the last ten minutes before dawn.) For this treachery, he becomes a mere 0-level human until the sun goes down, at which time he reverts to mummy form. If killed while "human", he remains dead until mummified and entombed (at which time he regains full identity and powers).

Knowing that he will again be transformed into a mummy at sunset, he never truly enjoys his brief hours as a mortal.

Closing the Borders: When Anhktepot wants to seal his domain, the borders radiate an impenetrable wall of heat. Characters trying to push through the wall receive 1d10 points of damage for the first round, doubling each round after that. Travelers who attempt to push through invariably turn to ash before reaching the other side. (The first round, the character takes 1d10 points, the next round 2dl0, the following round 4dl0, and so on. Should a character keep pressing forward, he crumbles to ash when the damage he suffers exceeds his current hit points.)

Combat: Anhktepot is a greater mummy as described in the *Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II*. Those Dungeon Masters who wish to use *Van Richten's Guide to Ancient Dead* can consider him a mummy of the fifth rank of invulnerability.

The touch of the pharaoh causes a rotting disease that kills in 1d3 days. One day after infection, the victim experiences convulsions so violent that spellcasting and weapon use are impossible. For each day that the victim lives after the first, he permanently loses 2 points of Charisma and 1 point each of Strength and Constitution. Only a *wish* spell can heal this loss. Recovery from the mummy rot itself requires one *cure disease* spell for every day the disease has progressed, and they must all be cast within a twenty-four hour period.

Anhktepot is turned as a "special" monster. He is immune to damage from holy water but suffers 1d6 points of damage from nonevil holy symbols. The ankh around his neck restores 2d6 points of damage per round, even after he is reduced to 0 hit points or below (so he regenerates if it is not removed).

In addition to his 25% magic resistance, the mummy is immune to sleep, charm, hold, death, and cold-based spells; mind-control (including mind-reading spells or psionic powers); poison; and normal fire. His aura forces all who look upon him to attempt a fear check with a -4 penalty.

In life, Anhktepot was a 13th-level priest of the sun god Ra, and he still wields the power of that position (although Ra no longer grants his spells). He has major access to the spheres of all, astral, charm, creation, elemental, and sun and minor access to weather. His additional granted powers allow him to cast *light*, *continual light*, and *sunray* once per day and to control undead at will (as per turn undead). However, he cannot shapechange into a hawk as can other priests of Ra. He also gains all the normal spell bonuses and immunities that come with a Wisdom of 23 (see the *Player's Handbook*).

Pharazia

The Land: Most of the domain is covered by rolling sand dunes, with rock outcroppings breaking the monotony of the sand. These outcroppings often provide shelter to both travelers and beasts.

Pharazia has three major water holes, the greatest of which is in the capital city, Phiraz. The rivers of Pharazia are fed from this spring, flowing outward from the heart of the domain. Two of the rivers terminate in watering holes in the lower extremities of the domain. Although the water runs fairly pure, it still tastes brackish from traveling through the land.

The only trees in Pharazia are found along these riverbeds and water holes. The animals of the desert compete fiercely for the shade these trees provide. The human inhabitants of Pharazia know better than to try to use the shade these trees proffer since the creatures there usually present even more danger than the sun.

Cultural Level: Early Medieval.

The Folk: The majority of the inhabitants of this domain live in the city of Phiraz, under the direct supervision of Diamabel, a beautiful and powerful creature. Some claim he is an angel, and his appearance bears out that claim. The walled city offers protection from the dangers of the desert, but mighty Diamabel protects the people from more horrendous dangers. The city dwellers never leave Pharazia, because they know they would be without the protection of the angel. They follow the edicts of Diamabel and his law- givers without hesitation or question.

Pharazians are a superstitious lot. They seem to be good people, although their fears and anxieties tend to make them somewhat irritating. They are constantly guarding their words, fearful of saying something that will earn a whipping. They are also eager to turn in those whose mouths are not so closely guarded, for this diverts the wrathful eyes of their oppressors from themselves.

Pharazians have dusky skin and black hair. Their eyes are generally brown, although occasionally a child will enter the world with eyes as black as night. An old prophesy claims that a "black-eyed scoundrel" will bring about the undoing of Pharazia, so residents usually slay such children soon after birth. The people dress in light robes, wearing headdresses to protect their heads from the searing heat of the sun. Even in the relative coolness of the city, the sun still scorches those who are not prepared for its heat. The women also wear veils as part of their daily clothing.

The city dwellers are not the only inhabitants of Pharazia. In the desert live groups of nomads bent on destroying Diamabel. They claim he was once one of them, attaining his current form though wanton butchery and foul magic. Therefore, they are intent on ridding the world of his corruption at any cost. They do not disdain the aid of others but are a shifty, treacherous bunch.

These black-clad nomads always travel on camels, and no other creatures can match their speed in the desert. They never camp in the same place twice and always take care to conceal their presence. They know that if Diamabel spots them on his nightly flights, he will surely destroy them. Though they claim to know a sure method to bring about his destruction, they will not share it with outsiders.

Native Player Characters: The people of Pharazia are divided into two groups, the city dwellers and the nomads. The city dwellers receive the reading/writing proficiency for free; all children are taught to read so that they may study the tomes containing the wise sayings of Diamabel. Nomad player characters receive the land-based riding proficiency for free.

No player character priests originate from Pharazia, and all Pharazian native wizards are earth elementalists (see the *Tome of Magic*).

Personalities of Note: Diamabel dominates all aspects of life in Phiraz. Only the Allahn el Rashaan, leader of the nomadic tribe devoted to Diamabel's destruction, can measure up to Diamabel in stature. A powerful, heavily bearded warrior, Allahn's scimitars whirl like a zephyr when he attacks.

The Law: Only Diamabel's law holds any weight in Pharazia. He requires his people to pray for at least two hours per day and report any infractions of this law of prayer. Violators are subject to lashings or death, depending on how lenient Diamabel should feel.

Confession is a way of life, and white-robed men with scourges cleanse the impurities from those who commit sins or infractions. These men, known as law-givers, roam the streets of Phiraz, watching for crimes against Diamabel. They are extremely liberal with their floggings and have free rein in deciding what constitutes crime. Naturally, the most brutal Pharazians find their calling as part of Diamabel's law-givers. (As priests, the law-givers have major access to the spheres of sun and combat and minor access to necromantic.)

Encounters: Anyone passing along or near the river's banks may see dozens of crocodiles sunning themselves in the mud along the banks. Any noise or movement near these ferocious reptiles sends them sliding into the muddy river, where they either attack their prey in the water or wait until the threat has passed by on the land.

At night, travelers must beware the black-winged fiend that makes its way across the darkened sky. This horrific creature attacks without mercy or warning. The citizens of Phiraz do not know that this monstrous being is their beloved Diamabel, but many believe it is an agent of his vengeance.

Further Reading: The *Islands of Terror* game accessory gives more information on this domain and its overlord.

Overlord of Har'Akir

Diamabel
16th-Level Human Fighter,
Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	1	Str	21
Movement	Fl 24 (C)	Dex	18
Level/ Hit Dice	12	Con	17
Hit Points	77	Int	15
THAC0	5	Wis	13
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	19 (3)*
Damage/ Attack	1d10+12/1d10+12		
Special Attacks	Two-handed +3 *flame tongue, fear,* wing buffet		
Special Defences	Regenerate 2 hp/round, need +2 or better magical weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	30%		

* This Charisma rating is for Diamabel's nighttime form.

Diamabel was once a short, swarthy, dark-haired desert nomad. Upon his entry to the Demiplane of Dread, however, his appearance transformed completely.

During the day, Diamabel is an awesome figure to behold. He is now a seven-foot-tall, pale-skinned being with glorious wings covered with snow-white feathers. His clean-shaven face radiates a kind of transcendent beauty, though marred by lines of fear and frustration. His silvery-white hair reflects the morning and evening light in a rainbow of colors, and his intense blue eyes range from sky blue to glacial ice as his mood dictates. With the slightest move, muscles ripple on his clean, powerful limbs. Despite this divine appearance, his face reflects an underlying hatred and quick temper.

When the sun sinks below the horizon, a change takes place in Diamabel's body. Though awe inspiring, this mutation is also intensely horrifying. Diamabel's wings decay instantly, revealing only a framework of bones with corrupted feathers dangling uselessly from their hollow shafts. Then, his handsome features slough away, leaving the hideous face of a zombie, and his sleek skin and powerful muscles mutate into decaying ropes of rotting flesh. Finally, his fine, silken clothes become black, woolen tatters, flapping in any breeze - no matter how small.

Background: The son of a wealthy desert sheik, Diamabel knew he was destined to rule. From an early age, he had been repulsed by the world he saw around him. His nanny had delighted him with tales of faraway lands where people who lived clean and healthy lives were converted into beings of pure light. Thus, in his eyes, the world he lived in

appeared filthy, and as he grew, he came to feel that it was his calling to cleanse it. For this purpose, he began to gather more power than any other sheik before him. Members of his tribe felt that they could use a strong leader, so they supported him.

When Diamabel was sixteen years old, his father fortuitously passed away, and those who whispered about foul play also vanished. Diamabel proved himself an able, if erratic, leader, and his people learned to trust him implicitly. However, the other nomadic tribes would not follow him, so he set about subjugating them.

After several stunning victories, his people began to realize that Diamabel planned to conquer far more than just the dunes. One night under the stars, he shared his vision with his people: to exterminate those who do not believe in his god and his creed. He promised that for this mighty deed, he and his people would be transformed into beings of light. He and his loyal followers then killed any of their fellow tribesmen who disagreed with this policy of genocide.

For the next several years, Diamabel and his forces became the terror of the desert. Sweeping over the dunes on their swift camels, they laid waste to the caravans of wealthy merchants and the troops sent to destroy the mutinous nomads.

Still, the dream to become one of the heaven's chosen burned within Diamabel's breast. At night, his dreams taunted him, transforming him into a pale-skinned, feathery-winged beauty, so every morning he arose with a greater fervor than before. His obsession led him to disregard all safety for himself, and he began attacking entire cities.

Finally, as he butchered a northern town, he met his doom. An arrow fired by a hidden sniper burrowed into his stomach, and he passed from consciousness. As he faded into darkness, he lamented only the fact that he would never see the light of the heavens alive.

When he awoke, he was greatly surprised; he had not expected to survive the wound. His appearance proved an even greater shock. He had at long last achieved his childhood goal: He finally bore a truly angelic appearance. Little did he know that this glorious transformation came at a dear price.

Current Sketch: Diamabel considers himself betrayed by the world at large. Now that he has finally achieved the dream most dear to him, he has found that it is not everything he imagined. The transformation he undergoes every night tortures him more than he cares to admit.

Not only does he have the pain of the transformation to contend with every evening, he also must accept that he has been totally cut off from his deity. He had thought that his evolution into a higher state would grant him a closer rapport with his god, but he has found the opposite to be true. Instead of enjoying the confidences of his deity, he finds himself trying even harder to reach him.

Diamabel is convinced that he need only eliminate all infidels in his land to break down the wall between himself and his god. During the day, he makes the most of his beautiful form, lazing the hours away heedlessly. Each night, his bestial appearance forcibly reminds him of his situation, so he does his best to rectify the situation. Any beings suspected of being unclean or plotting against him receive a visitation from this grotesque angel of death, who slays them, their families, and anyone who happens to get his way.

Diamabel does not admire imagination, nor does he reward enthusiasm except in matters of faith. His is the only law, and he will do his best to force the people to conform to his grand scheme.

Closing the Borders: When he wishes to close the borders of Pharazia, Diamabel creates a cloud of stinging dust, which swirls around the edges of the domain. The sand whirls quickly enough to flay the flesh of any creature passing into it. Only the most foolhardy creatures dare the sandstorm, and none ever return from a venture into the sandy whirlwind.

Any character who ventures into the sandstorm suffers ten points of damage each round within it. Even magical items and spells do not render a person immune to the effects of the sandstorm. These items become inert and useless until taken from the storm.

When Diamabel allows the borders of Pharazia to re-open, the edges revert to the Misty Border on three sides and Sebua on the last. The blue sky arcs overhead, although the vertical planes of the borders still resemble swirling, vaporous walls.

Combat: When enraged enough to attack (not an infrequent occurrence), Diamabel becomes a truly awesome figure to

behold. In either form, his full power suddenly manifests, and his opponents must make successful saving throws vs. spell with a -2 penalty or flee in terror.

If any opponents actually enter melee with him, he strikes out with *Spiritburner*, his mighty *flame tongue sword*. Even if he misses with *Spiritburner*, his wings can deliver a thunderous buffet to a single foe. On a successful attack, these wings leave his enemy stunned and unable to attack for one round.

Diamabel is nearly indestructible. He has learned to profit from his association with the land, drawing strength from it if need be. Not only does he regenerate 2 hit points per round, but he can heal himself completely once per day.

If defeated, his body immolates itself, along with all his possessions. His ashes then migrate to the far corners of his domain, no matter how they may be scattered or contained, and in one month's time, he reconstitutes completely, *Spiritburner* in hand. If his foes remain in Pharazia, Diamabel relentlessly hunts them until they are destroyed.

Sebua

The Land: Sebua is a small wasteland. The terrain ranges from soft sand dunes to rocky flats and steep granite cliffs. Water holes and oases dot the domain, although a third are dry, and yet another third are foul.

By day, heat scorches the deserts even though the sky is often dark and overcast. Storm clouds usually gather in the morning, and by afternoon, they release a brief, intense torrent that seeps quickly into the ground. Sometimes, the dark sky will turn from green and then to black, indicating an approaching sandstorm. The clouds always dissipate at night, revealing a virtually starless sky lit by an orange moon, which casts an amber glow on the rocks and sand.

A massive rock formation marks the eastern border of Sebua, and the Valley of Death cuts through the center of this formation. Sandstone cliffs from five hundred to one

thousand feet high form the valley's walls. Sand periodically spills from the ledge far above, cascading to the valley floor with a soft hiss. This valley was once the site of great temples honoring the gods of Earth, Sky, and the Underworld. The temple to the Devourer of Light is the only one still standing.

The Valley of Death is also the site of great tombs, holding untold treasures and unknown horrors. These tombs belonged to former pharaohs, nobles, officials, and their families. The walls above the tombs are carved with detailed reliefs, each featuring the mightiest deed of the person entombed here.

The city of Anhalla lies near the center of the domain, not far from the mouth of the valley. Like the temples in the Valley of Death, time has ravaged most of the city, leaving behind only building foundations and occasional arches. At the center of Anhalla lies a vast oasis. A handful of poorly built mud-brick houses have replaced the extravagant buildings that previously surrounded this area.

Anhalla is the center of most life in Sebua. The ruins and houses are overrun by ill-tempered monkeys and vicious baboons, who harass and steal from those travelers who stop at the oasis. In addition, a handful of shy, elusive children live here. Though their origins are unknown, it is said that they never age or grow up.

The estate of Tiyet lays near Anhalla, and sometimes, the sounds of merriment can be heard from beyond its tall walls. However, the nomads of Pharazia know that anyone who goes to investigate these sounds will never return.

Pharazia has three major water holes, the greatest of which is in the capital city, Phiraz. The rivers of Pharazia are fed from this spring, flowing outward from the heart of the domain. Two of the rivers terminate in watering holes in the lower extremities of the domain. Although the water runs fairly pure, it still tastes brackish from traveling through the land.

Cultural Level: Bronze Age (the overlord) and Stone Age (the wild children).

The Folk: Only the wild children of Anhalla live in this domain. Though the black-robed nomads of Pharazia pass through every few months, they stay for only a day or two. They fear Tiyet, the young woman who dwells in the mysterious, secluded estate outside of Anhalla.

The wild children dress in rags, their hair grows wild and tangled, and they do not speak any known languages. They are all human and dark-skinned like the overlord of the domain.

The Law: No ruler claims political dominion over Sebua, but the nomads of Pharazia know that the domain's overlord, Tiyet, is a woman to be avoided.

Native Player Characters:Creating a character from Sebua will be a challenge for any role-player, and something the Dungeon Master and player should consider carefully. The only native beings in Sebua are the wild children, so any player characters must be drawn from their ranks.

A Sebuan native player character must be a 1st-level fighter or ranger. Initially, he cannot choose any nonweapon proficiencies involving book learning or complicated skills, and the only weapon proficiencies allowed to him are club, spear, and sling. He receives the desert survival and running proficiencies for free. The Sebuan native speaks a tongue spoken only by other wild children, although a *speak with animals* spell allows other characters to understand this speech. Sebuan natives can learn other proficiencies and languages as play progresses should they join a party of other player characters, so unused slots are not lost. To begin with, the character receives no starting money or possessions, except for his ragged clothing and a makeshift weapon or two.

The immortality of the Sebuan wild children is part of the curse of another domain resident (see "Personalities of Note" below), so as soon as the character leaves Sebua, he begins to age normally.

Playing a Sebuan native is difficult. These primitive humans lack in all social graces. Also, despite the harshness of life in Sebua, they are total innocents. The true horrors of the Demiplane will leave terrible emotional scars upon them. For this reason, they make all fear and horror checks with a -1 penalty.

Personalities of Note: Moosha, a unique vampire that gathers sustenance from the water in the bodies of living creatures, dwells at an oasis in the southern part of the domain. Because he murdered the last heir of a line chosen by the gods to rule the Black Land, he was cursed with eternal life and suffering until he could restore divine guidance to the people of Sebua. The key to Moosha's salvation lies in the wild children, for among them dwells an heir to the throne of the Black Land. If Moosha educates this child, he might be free of this curse. However, he is unaware of this, seeing the children only as prey.

Encounters: The temples and tombs of the Valley of Death are filled with bats - ugly, hairless creatures with pale, translucent skin that reveals the veins below. Brown beetles with shiny carapaces cover the floor beneath the bats, subsisting on their dung as well as the flesh of their dead. If a dead bat falls to the floor, it is quickly covered with a moving brown carpet of these beetles. At nightfall, the bats stream from the temples, flying toward the oases to feed.

Most oases in Sebua are fringed with reeds, where hordes of bloodthirsty mosquitoes breed and hatch. Each night, the sky above each oasis fills with these creatures, along with the hairless bats that feed on them. Along the western edge of the hills is a small lake, its waters tainted red by mineral deposits. The mosquitoes at this lake are especially vicious, coming out after sunset and forming black clouds darker than the night sky. Cloth and thin leather provide no defense, easily pierced by the female mosquito's long, slender feeding tube. A character's face, unless completely covered, is especially vulnerable to these insects. In less than a minute, exposed eyelids can become swollen shut.

At night, travelers must beware the black-winged fiend that makes its way across the darkened sky. This horrific creature attacks without mercy or warning. The citizens of Phiraz do not know that this monstrous being is their beloved Diamabel, but many believe it is an agent of his vengeance.

Further Reading: The adventure anthology *Children of the Night: Vampires* gives details on Moosha. The *Darklords* accessory details Tiyet, overlord of Sebua.

Overlord of Sebua

Tiyet
Unique Mummy, Neutral Evil



Armor Class	10	Str	8
Movement	12	Dex	12
Level/ Hit Dice	12	Con	13
Hit Points	60	Int	12
THAC0	8	Wis	10
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	17
Damage/ Attack	1d10+4		
Special Attacks	See below		
Special Defences	Need +1 or better magical weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	20%		

Tiyet is a slender woman who appears to be about twenty years old. Though she stands only five feet three inches tall, she still cuts quite an imposing figure. Her skin remains brown and smooth despite her undead status, and all her burial trappings have vanished. Tiyet always adorns herself with jewelry - a wide gold collar inlaid with turquoise, lapis lazuli and other semiprecious gems, silver bracelets, hair ornaments, and rings. Her large, almond-shaped eyes are dark and rimmed with a lead-based kohl, the lids tinted with a malachite shadow. She also blackens her thick hair with oil and laudanum and stains her lips dark red with a mixture of red ocher, tallow, and blood.

Background: Tiyet once lived in a desert kingdom now remembered only as the Black Land. Her father was a scribe for Khamose, fourth son of the pharaoh. Khamose became entranced with Tiyet's beauty when she visited his estate to see her father. He soon asked for Tiyet's hand in marriage, and she agreed without hesitation. Tiyet was as ambitious as she was beautiful, desiring nothing less than to live in the palace of the pharaoh. Marrying Khamose brought her much closer to that goal.

Although Khamose called Tiyet his wife, she was little more than an esteemed concubine; a woman named Nuferi was Khamose's Grand Wife. This arrangement did not suit Tiyet well, so she decided to change it. Through clever manipulation, she placed Nuferi in a compromising position with a male slave. Khamose, his honor stained, ordered that Nuferi suffer the fate of all adulteresses: death. Though Nuferi pleaded her innocence, she was thrown into a pit filled with wild jackals. Tiyet thus became Khamose's Grand Wife.

Only one man suspected Tiyet's role in Nuferi's death. This man, known as Zordenahkt, wanted Tiyet for himself. Armed with the knowledge of Tiyet's crime, he coerced her affections from her. In time, this unlikely pair fell in love. Tiyet succumbed to his power, Zordenahkt to her charms.

Tiyet eventually tired of her husband and lost interest in promoting him, thinking him too stupid to rise above the pharaoh's other sons. Each day, she departed under the pretense of taking offerings to the tomb of Khamose's ancestors. In truth, she entered the nearby Temple of Apophis, God of the Darkness, devourer of the sun. There, she and Zordenahkt enjoyed clandestine meetings.

At night, however, fear of her crimes being discovered weighed heavily on Tiyet's mind, so she slept fitfully. One night, she dreamed of her journey to the Underworld, a journey that all members of her nation believed they would take:

Tiyet stood in the Hall of Judgement, presided over by the great Osiris. Maat, goddess of Truth, loomed before her, holding a scale and a feather. Tiyet then realized that she was to undergo the test of truth, a test that all had to take before passing into the afterlife. The goddess took Tiyet's heart from her body. Tiyet knew that if her heart weighed less than the symbolic feather, her afterlife would be peaceful; however, if her heart was heavy with sin, it would tip the scale and a second, more horrible, death would await. Tiyet watched with horror as the scale tipped toward the heart. Quickly and eagerly, hordes of fiendish serpents and creatures closed in around her, tearing the flesh from her bones as she screamed in terror.

At that moment in the dream, Tiyet awoke. After telling Zordenahkt of her nightmare, she begged him to find a way to prevent this from happening. He told her of a procedure that would forever bind her to the earth, preventing her from passing into the Underworld. He explained that this could be performed only on the newly dead and that he was not willing to try it, for the true consequences were unknown. The nightmare did not return, so Tiyet did not mention it again. She and Zordenahkt continued to meet each day, rapturous in each other's company.

Still, Khamose was not as foolish as Tiyet imagined. He noticed that her attentions, once ample, had waned. He assigned a young servant to spy on her. The servant followed her successfully to the temple, and hiding in the antechamber, he listened to Tiyet and Zordenahkt as they spoke.

When Tiyet returned home, she overheard the slave talking with Khamose, revealing her secrets. The incensed Khamose vowed that Tiyet would face a death even more horrid than Nuferi's before her.

Terrified, Tiyet returned to the temple and sought out Zordenahkt. She begged him to kill her and perform the ceremony that would save her from terror in the Hall of Judgment. When Zordenahkt refused, she drew a dagger from her gown, and begging for the mercy of the god Apophis, she plunged the dagger into her own chest.

Deep within the temple, Zordenahkt performed the ceremony that she had desired. He bathed Tiyet's body in the precious oils and recited a common spell to preserve her beauty. Then, he made an incision in her chest and removed her heart. Zordenahkt placed Tiyet's heart in a stone jar filled with oils and offered it to his serpent god in exchange for her safety from the Underworld. He then wrapped Tiyet's body in linen and carried it to his own family tomb. There, he poisoned himself with the venom of an asp and laid down beside her to die.

Tiyet arose the next night. She pulled the strips from her eyes and saw the body of Zordenahkt beside her. Maddened with grief and still wrapped in the linen swaddling of the dead, she crossed the desert and went to the estate of Khamose. Each heart within the house was audible to her, beating with a maddening pace. Loudest was the heart of Khamose, compelling her to seek it out.

Tiyet stole into his room, silent as a shadow. She placed her hand upon his chest, and found that the heartbeat slowed. At that point, Khamose stirred, and his eyes opened wide. His mouth gaped, but before he could scream, Tiyet paralyzed him with her gaze. Then, while he still lived, she reached through his chest and drew out his heart. Tiyet then placed the bloody mass to her red lips and swallowed it. The audible beating of the other hearts in the household stopped; sated, she could hear them no longer.

Tiyet returned immediately to the tomb and lay down beside the still body of Zordenahkt. When she awoke, however, she was alone. The dark powers had granted her rulership of Sebua.

Current Sketch: Tiyet has lived in Sebua for almost two hundred years. She is the overlord, but she rules only the dead. She cannot control the few living inhabitants of her domain or visitors from other realms. Tiyet controls all the dead in her domain, especially mummies. It is likely that visitors will confront these terrors before they meet Tiyet herself, even though they may see her watching from a distance.

Tiyet lives in a noble's estate, since the palace she once sought remains beyond her reach. Sometimes she attempts to hold grand parties like those the wealthy in her native land once enjoyed. No one actually attends; the dark powers create the sounds of guests and their revelry for her. She often hears Zordenahkt's voice, though it never speaks to her, usually fading quickly if she seeks it out. Woe to the person who is drawn by these sounds and the lights of Tiyet's home, intending to join the guest list.

Tiyet is a lonely, bitter creature, and visitors rarely catch more than a glimpse of her. She often appears briefly, standing for one moment at the edge of a pool and then disappearing suddenly. It is not that she is shy. Actually, because she resents their intrusion into her realm, Tiyet just prefers to not associate with the living.

Tiyet is now a creature of dark desires - one who craves not only blood, but also the pulsing organ which drives it through the body. Though she despises what she has become, she often cannot resist the temptation of a living heart. Its beating drives her to madness, shutting out all else but a singular desire to cease its beating - by pulling it from its haven and devouring it.

At least once a year, Tiyet must eat a human heart. She will not die if this does not occur, but she is still driven to perform the deed. The longer she goes without devouring a living heart, the louder nearby heartbeats sound to her. She becomes consumed with an obsession to feed, her body racked with unbearable pain. When she does find a victim to finally satisfy her desire, she may not be satisfied with just one heart. Like a starving man, she may gorge herself even after her physical hunger is relieved - perhaps until the shock of her actions makes her sick.

Closing the Borders: When Tiyet wishes to close the borders of Sebua, she creates a storm along the boundaries of her domain. This whirling, howling nightmare inflicts 2d6 points of damage upon any creature who attempts to brave it. While within the storm, all characters are completely deaf and blind. Finally, upon emerging from this terrible storm, characters find themselves back in Sebua.

Combat: Tiyet does not rely on brute strength to rip the hearts from her victims, but this small woman does not require brawn. The land has granted her other, far more impressive, strengths. Her gaze can paralyze anyone within sight. Victims are allowed a saving throw vs. paralyzation to resist this ability. Victims who do not meet her gaze each receive a +2 bonus to the saving throw. If she touches her victims as she attempts to paralyze them, however, they each receive a -2 penalty to the saving throw.

Tiyet's touch can also have other debilitating effects. She may use only one touch attack per round, including the paralysis. If she chooses to inflict wounds, her touch can cause 1d10+4 points of damage per round. This damage can even be delayed up to two hours, so the victim may not understand what has caused his affliction.

Tiyet's kiss - a third touch attack - drains 1 Strength point per round. As long as the victim remains in Sebua, this loss is permanent. Upon leaving this domain, victims regain these Strength points at a rate of one point per day.

Tiyet's most frightening powers directly affect the organ she so badly craves. With four rounds of concentration, Tiyet can use her paralyzing gaze to cause the muscle fibers of her victim's heart to twitch in an uncoordinated fashion, preventing the heart from beating effectively. Provided her victim is within sixty yards, she can make him suffer the effects of a heart attack: labored breathing, profuse sweating, a crushing weight upon the chest, pain in the neck and jaw, and intense pain in the arms, particularly the left. She needs no attack roll for this ability, and her victim receives no saving throw.

The first round, Tiyet's assault on the heart reduces a victim's current hit points by twenty-five percent. The second and third rounds inflict the same amount of damage, leaving the victim with only twenty-five percent of his hit points remaining. At this point, the victim is unable to move on his own due to the great pain. During the fourth round, the character's hit points drop to ten percent of his hit point total from the beginning of the encounter. This is the most damage she can cause in this manner; to kill her victim, she must actually touch him.

Tiyet kills by cardiac arrest only if she has no other choice. If a heart ceases to beat, she cannot feed upon it. Only a beating heart can satisfy her need. For this reason, she usually paralyzes her victims. With her unique ability to reach through the chest, she draws out the heart, which continues to beat outside the body.

This overlord finds it difficult to ignore her curse. Heartbeats of any intelligent, humanoid creature within a mile are audible to her until she feeds. Then, mere hours later, she can again hear the beats, first faintly, then ever stronger. If she has not fed for eleven months or more months, the sound is painfully loud, echoing inside her skull.

Tiyet's remaining powers seem mundane in comparison to such horrors. Once a day, she can create a sandstorm and move it as she pleases, using a unique form of the *control weather* spell. The storm covers up to a square mile and lasts up to two hours, depending on Tiyet's wishes. She requires three rounds to create the storm, but her powers are not restricted during that time. Also, once each day, she can summon a swarm of beetles. Some will attempt to crawl into the ears and noses of their victims, driving them mad with pain until the insects are removed (victims must roll successful saving throws vs. spell or be incapacitated for 1d4 rounds).

At will, Tiyet can assume the form of a small monkey with sharp, little teeth. She takes this form only if she desires to hide among the many monkeys that roam her gardens and her domain. It is also useful because it allows her to get close to otherwise cautious victims, who may think the monkeys are cute. In this form, her touch can still inflict damage, but she usually delays the effects to avoid detection.

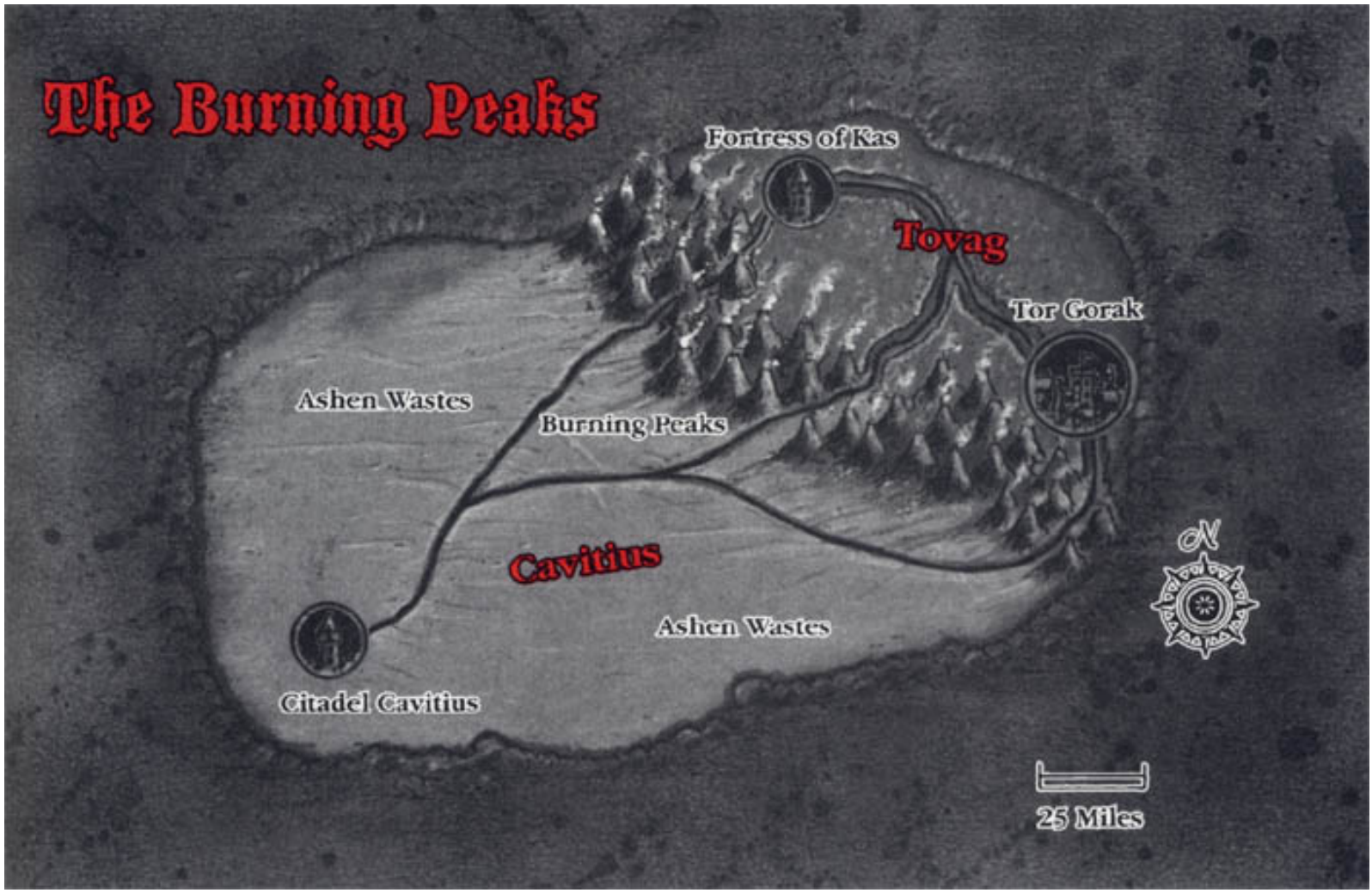
Mummies in Sebua can be controlled by Tiyet, just as zombies and skeletons may act at the bidding of an evil sorcerer. Since travelers and grave robbers occasionally destroy her mummies, Tiyet usually creates new mummies out of the bodies of her victims. At her disposal are the vats and supplies in an embalmer's house on the outskirts of Anhalla. Visitors sometimes find bodies awaiting mummification there.

Only magical weapons with at least a +1 bonus can harm Tiyet. If reduced to 0 hit points (or below), she has been defeated but not destroyed. Tiyet's body will crumble into a pile of glittering sand, but within a month, she reforms somewhere in the Valley of Death.

The only way to destroy Tiyet is to trick her into eating her own heart. (The organ still lies where Zordenahkt left it long ago, in the temple of Apophis.) If the heart is brought to her lips, it begins to beat, and she cannot resist it, no matter how recently she has fed.

The Burning Peaks

The newest of Ravenloft's Clusters appeared fully formed from the Mists, drawn from the GREYHAWK campaign setting. Despite its recent creation, most inhabitants of the Demiplane have heard of the dreadful masters of this realm: Vecna the lich god and his nemesis Kas the Destroyer.



The paired domains of the Burning Peak are closely tied despite their great differences. It is difficult to imagine a less hospitable land than that of Cavitius, the realm of Vecna. This region of volcanic ash and perpetual twilight leeches the life from its inhabitants as it crushes their spirits. On the other side of the Burning Peaks lies the domain of Tovag. In this temperate land, life - and even some slight measure of hope - still exists, despite the tyrannical nature of the overlord who rules it.

The masters of these two realms hated each other in life and have carried over this enmity into their undeath. They each struggle to gain power over the other, determined to slay an enemy who always remains hidden on the opposite side of the Burning Peaks.

Culturally, the people in both realms share common roots. Still, those visitors drawn from the world of Oerth rarely recognize the peoples and cultures here, as the language and customs of these folk are lost in the history of their supposed

homeworld. Nowhere on Oerth does anyone speak or understand the language spoken in Cavitius and Tovag.

Cavitius

The Land: The tortured land of Cavitius is the westernmost of the two realms that make up the Burning Peaks Cluster. This roughly crescent-shaped domain gives way in the east to the Burning Peaks mountain range, which gives this cluster its name. On all other sides, the Mists of Ravenloft surround Cavitius.

Night does not exist in Cavitius - or perhaps day does not. It can be difficult to tell, for the uniformly dark gray sky creates a perpetual state of twilight throughout this domain. The vast majority of this realm consists of nothing more than a seemingly endless desert of ash spewed from the volcanoes of the Burning Peaks. These emissions give the sky its somber, oppressive color.

Known as the Ashen Wastes, the deserts of Cavitius can be lethal. Any living creature who travels through these wastes begins to die. No healing of any kind is possible within the Ashen Wastes, even through magical means; only within the walls of the Citadel Cavitius can the wounded hope to be restored to health. In addition, each hour that a living creature spends outside of the Citadel reduces him by 1 Hit Die or level. A creature who falls to 0 Hit Dice instantly becomes a desert zombie under the control of Vecna (see the *RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III*).

At the eastern edge of this domain, where the jagged slopes of the Burning Peaks rise like shark's teeth from the Ashen Waste, life is just as unwelcome. In addition to the deadly properties of the Ashen Wastes, these volcanic mountains suffer from flowing lava, streams of highly acidic water, frequent tremors, avalanches, and other natural perils, which make the battles held there even more dangerous.

The only city in this realm is the skull-shaped Citadel Cavitius. Within this gloomy, somber city dwell nearly ten thousand men and women. Although an occasional demihuman finds his way into this abode of the damned, only humans are native to this domain.

The flagstone road out of Citadel Cavitius eventually branches into three separate roads, which reach across the Ashen Wastes, wind their way through passes in the Burning Slopes, and emerge in the domain of Tovag. As it leaves the Citadel, it is well constructed and maintained, but over the course of its transit, it gradually becomes more worn and broken. By the time they reach the passes, the white stones turn brown, stained with the blood of the untold thousands who died there. Importantly, the life-draining Ashen Wastes do not affect those who travel on these roads. A single step off of them, however, and the land begins leaching life from the traveler.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: The people of this domain all live within the confines of Citadel Cavitius. They are a grim and desolate folk, utterly devoid of all hope and most emotion. Although free-willed, most have had their spirits broken and will obey without question any order given to them by Vecna or one of his minions. It is difficult to imagine a more pitiful bunch of wretches than the poor folk who dwell here. Everyone in this city worships the Maimed Lord (Vecna), for to do otherwise invites only torture and death.

The Law: Vecna maintains order through the agents of his faith, The Fingers of Vecna. This crushing, tyrannical group of enforcers is technically part of the Church of the Whispered One, though they act like little more than an organized collection of thugs and bullies.

Although Vecna fears no mortal, he is not foolish enough to take chances, especially in light of his unexpected imprisonment. As such, the use of magic within Citadel Cavitius is punishable by death. The only exceptions to this law, of course, are those priests who draw their power from worship of the Whispered One himself.

Native Player Characters:Characters from Cavitius may be only fighters or avengers. No other classes exist here, except for the priests of Vecna (who are not suitable for use as player characters). In addition, no demihumans live in this grim land.

Because of the oppressive nature of life here, natives of Cavitius receive a -4 penalty to their Charisma scores. Their exposure to the energy draining effects of the Ashen Wastes, however, gives them an increased level of endurance, so they use 12-sided Hit Dice rather than the traditional 10- sided Hit Dice used by warriors.

Personalities of Note: Vecna's chief lieutenants are a pair of highly unusual golems. One is composed wholly of eyes torn from the sockets of criminals, spies, and traitors, and the other is fashioned of hands cut from the arms of thieves, assassins, and charlatans. Known as "the Eye" and "the Hand", these sinister creatures are unswervingly loyal to their master and highly intelligent.

Encounters: Those traveling within the Citadel Cavitius will have the normal sorts of encounters one might associate with a large city. Life in Citadel Cavitius seems particularly brutal, however, with the strong taking what they will.

Outside the city, desert zombies dominate the Ashen Wastes. Other types of unintelligent undead are not uncommon, but people mostly fear these so-called "lurkers beneath the sand". The undead under Vecna's control never leave the confines of his domain.

Because this land has no distinct day or night, most creatures can be encountered at any time.

Further Reading: The demigod Vecna is featured in the GREYHAWK adventure *Vecna Lives!*. *The Book of Artifacts* details the two artifacts bearing his name (the *Hand* and *Eye of Vecna*) as well as the *Sword of Kas*.

Overlord of Cavitius

Vecna
Demigod (Lich), Lawful Evil



Armor Class	-10	Str	25
Movement	9	Dex	25
Level/ Hit Dice	30	Con	25
Hit Points	150	Int	25
THAC0	2	Wis	25
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	25
Damage/ Attack	2d10+14 (due to Strength)		
Special Attacks	Paralysis, multi-tasking, spells		
Special Defences	Immortality, need +5 or better magical weapon to hit, paralysis		
Magic Resistance	See below		

Note: These ratings reflect the fact that Vecna's powers are constrained by the Demiplane of Dread. He is trapped in this physical manifestation and cannot take on his incorporeal or avatar forms.

Background: Few people call the demigod Vecna by his true name. Throughout his life he has been known by many titles, perhaps the first being simply the Master of the Spider Throne. In time, he came to be called the Maimed Lord, the One Named Only in Whispers, the Whispered One, and the Dying King. Most recently, in recognition of his imprisonment in Ravenloft, he has become known as the Chained God.

Vecna is one of the most infamous and feared creatures in existence. Born centuries ago on the distant world of Oerth, he was a student of the darkest arts and practitioner of the most vile forms of magic. In time, he became master of a great empire based on fear and horror. Exactly where this nation was located on Oerth or where the dark tower from which it was ruled stood, however, is a much debated topic among the sages on that world.

The evil of Vecna was said to have been limitless. In fact, legends claim that he actually bred whole villages of people just to supply bodies for his experiments. Other stories say that his power stripped whole sections of Oerth of all life, creating regions like the deadly Bright Desert. Whether or not these tales are true, it cannot be doubted that Vecna's dark and sinister armies spread death and destruction across whole continents.

When Vecna grew old, he used his magical powers to ward off the final coming of death. In time, however, even his great talents were unable to stay the hand of finality. Exactly what process he used is unknown, but somehow the darkest of mortals transformed himself into the deadliest of liches.

As Vecna continued to amass power and spread evil, a powerful warrior named Kas rose to become his chief lieutenant. Known as Kas the Bloody-Handed, he pronounced Vecna's judgments and exercised power second only to the lien himself. To reward his lieutenant for this devotion and service, Vecna forged the powerful Sword of Kas. With this weapon in hand, none could stand against the evil warrior.

For a time, the darkness that shrouded Oerth grew even more terrible under the might of these two sinister beings. In time, however, Kas was tempted by the power of his great weapon, and he turned on his master. After a great battle that

decimated the dark tower of Vecna, both combatants were destroyed. All that remained were the Sword of Kas and the Hand and Eye of Vecna.

As a creature of absolute darkness, Vecna became revered by those who would do evil. Over time, the wor- ship and prayers of these people empowered the lingering remains of his spirit, and Vecna became a demigod.

Even godhood, however, was not enough to satisfy the cravings of the Whispered One. Working through his avatar, Vecna sought to regain his empire and, using the power that would thus be his, elevate himself to the status of greater god. Had he succeeded, all of Oerth would have been his to command, though it is doubtful that even this would have mollified the Maimed Lord.

Fortunately, Vecna's bid to assume absolute power over the World of Greyhawk failed. In addition, Vecna's plan included a fatal flaw, which resulted in his current imprisonment. While he resided on the Outer Planes, Vecna was safe from the ever hungry Mists of Ravenloft. Because of the spells that his avatar wove in his name, however, Vecna created a tenuous link between himself and the Prime Material Plane. He thought nothing of this at the time; after all, what force would dare to challenge the great and immortal Vecna? Of course, Vecna did not realize the strength of the dark powers and the tenacity of the Mists. When they claimed his fortress, Citadel Cavitius, he found himself pulled along with it.

Current Sketch: Vecna is wild with fury. He constantly rages against the powers that hold him in place, vowing that he will not only find a way to escape, but that he will also destroy the forces that currently imprison him. In addition to his determination to see the mysterious forces of Ravenloft annihilated, Vecna regularly confronts a more tangible enemy. On the other side of the Burning Peaks lies the domain of Tovag, ruled by Vecna's most hated enemy, the traitor Kas.

Vecna regularly directs his forces to attack Kas's domain, and Kas routinely returns the compliment. Because Kas carefully protects the few passes through the Burning Peaks, Vecna's undead armies have not been able to enter Tovag; thus, all of the battles between these two powers take place in the volcanic range. Horrible and bloody as these clashes are, neither side ever gains an advantage over the other.

Vecna is constantly enraged by his fate. He fails to understand why he cannot simply break free of this accursed place. It may well be that Vecna's own anger and rage blinds him to possibilities of escape that he might otherwise discover. Also, he does not understand why he cannot destroy Kas. The knowledge that Kas the Betrayer commands a realm adjacent to his own gnaws at Vecna constantly.

For a person who desires only the accumulation of power and the acquisition of knowledge, Vecna's current impotence and confusion is as terrible a fate as one could wish upon the overlord.

Closing the Borders: Vecna is able to seal the borders of his domain, preventing anyone from escaping into the Mists. He cannot, however, close the border between Cavitius and Tovag. As that frontier is marked by the peaks of the sulfurous Burning Peaks, though, few travelers seek such a route. The passes through these mountains are thick with the dead and undead remnants of Vecna's endless war with the hated Kas.

When Vecna chooses to close his borders, those who seek to leave by way of the endless Ashen Wastes are set upon by a numberless army of crawling claws.

These disembodied hands worm their way out of the ash to drag travelers down, choke the life out of them, and tear them apart.

Combat: Vecna is a being far beyond the power of virtually any adventurer to confront and destroy. Even when he does not use any of his divine abilities against an enemy, the raw power that courses through his body is almost unstoppable.

In melee combat, Vecna strikes with his withered, bony hand. In addition to this powerful blow (which inflicts 14 points of damage), the energy-draining chill that they carry causes each strike to inflict another 2d10 points of damage. Each successful attack also requires the target to make a successful saving throw vs. paralysis or be instantly frozen in place. While the paralysis caused by the attack of a normal lich can be lifted with a simple *dispel magic*, nothing less than a *dispel evil* will free someone from Vecna's power.

Vecna is cloaked in a aura of absolute evil. The exact effect of this magical radiance depends upon the level of the victim as indicated on the table below.

Table 3: Effects of Vecna's Aura

Victims Level/HD	Effect
1-4	Madness check
5-9	Horror check
9-12	Fear check
13-16	Morale check
17+	No effect

It should be noted that these effects are cumulative, requiring a character to make the check associated with his level plus all checks below it on the table. Thus, a 7th-level character who dares to look upon the form of the Chained God must make a horror, fear, and morale check.

Vecna's stature as both a lich and demigod makes him incredibly difficult to harm. First and foremost, he is immune to harm from any weapon of less than +5 enchantment. The only exception to this is a *holy avenger*, which can hit Vecna regardless of its magical bonus. Normal creatures, no matter how many Hit Dice they might have, cannot harm the demigod. Vecna cannot be turned, even though he is technically undead. So powerful is the will of the Chained God that none may drive him away through a sheer act of faith.

The highly magical nature of Vecna makes it very difficult to affect him with magic. He has a natural 70% resistance to all spells cast by mortal creatures, a 40% resistance to those cast by other demigods, and a 20% resistance to gods of greater stature. In addition, he is immune to all spells from the schools of enchantment/charm, illusion/phantasm, and necromancy, as well as those from the charm, healing, and chaos spheres. No manner of *polymorph* or similar spell can affect Vecna. Vecna has a saving throw of 4 at all times. No act of a mortal can reduce his chances of success when attempting a saving throw.

Finally, Vecna may cast any wizard or priest spell. He casts these by act of will, requiring no verbal, somatic, or material components. In addition, any spell employed by the Chained God has a casting time of 0. Of course, all of the spells cast by Vecna function as per the rules governing their use in the Demiplane of Dread.

Importantly, Vecna is able to do two simultaneous things without any penalty. Thus, he might attack twice in one round, cast two spells, cast a spell and employ a magical item, and so forth. Vecna automatically gains the initiative in any exchange with mortal creatures. No action, spell, or other condition can alter this fact.

As a demigod, Vecna can speak to his followers wherever they might be. This power extends even beyond the Misty confines of Ravenloft, enabling Vecna to converse with his minions even on the Quasielemental Plane of Ash and on the world of Oerth.

Vecna is able to speak and understand any form of language. This extends to such esoteric forms of communication as sign language, color changes, and other nonverbal languages, This ability also applies to codes and any written form of communication.

Vecna, like any demigod, is able to grant his priests spells of up to 5th level. He does this as a reward for faithful prayer and devotion to his unholy cause. This ability is not limited by the confines of the Demiplane, so Vecna's priests on Oerth receive their spells just as if their god were not a prisoner of the Mists.

No mortal creature or demigod can snuff out Vecna's life force. Due to his exceedingly high Constitution, he regenerates 1 hit point every turn. If he is somehow slain by such beings, his body will disintegrate; however, 1d100 days later, the lich god will rise again to seek out and destroy those who harmed him.

Vecna is able to teleport about the domain of Cavitius at will. He can use this power once per round and, by employing his multi-tasking ability, he may teleport into an area and promptly make an attack. Most demigods are able to travel freely about the cosmos, stepping from plane to plane as easily as a man might leap across the stones in a brook, but the Chained God has lost this power. Though most gods are able to send forth powerful beings known as avatars to do their bidding, the mighty Vecna has also been stripped of this ability while within the Land of the Mists.

Vecna is the demigod of secrets and magic. As such, nothing can be kept from him. He knows instantly of everything that transpires within the walls of his citadel. This ability also extends to his followers, even those outside the Demiplane of Dread. Beyond the confines of Citadel Cavitius, however, his perception fades. He must use divinational magic to learn the secrets of those beyond the confines of the Mist. Of course, Vecna's magical power is so great that this is seldom a great handicap.

As patron god of secrets, Vecna is able to sense when someone has a secret, especially one causing shame or dread. In addition to knowing that such a secret exists, Vecna need only exert his will for a second to know the nature of the secret. Vecna uses this power to protect against treachery and to blackmail potential enemies into service.

The *Hand* and *Eye of Vecna* are two of the most powerful artifacts known to man. Though they are still located on Oerth, anyone foolish enough to claim them for himself and attempt to use their power risks falling under the domination of the Maimed Lord. Whenever an ability of either of those items is used, the owner must make a successful saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty (-6 if he owns both artifacts) or fall under the mental domination of the artifact. This domination functions as the spell of the same name and, thus, it is possible for a character to escape this mental servitude. Each time that a character breaks free of this domination, he receives a -2 penalty on future attempts. A character dominated by either the *hand* or *eye of Vecna* is subject to the mental commands of the Demigod of Secrets. As with his communication power, the borders of Ravenloft (and those of the planes themselves) are powerless to thwart this ability.

Tovas

This domain is the smaller of two regions which make up the Burning Peaks Cluster. Like its sister domain, Cavitius, it was pulled from the planet Oerth, home of the famed City of Greyhawk. Tovag lies pinned between the churning Mists and the jagged Burning Peaks. Much of the land is covered with light forests of scrub pines and other plants hardy enough to survive in the sulfur-rich soil.

The overlord of Tovag, the vampire Kas, dwells in a great fortress in the northern portion of the domain. In the south lies the densely packed city of Tor Gorak and the expanses of farms that supply grain and other crops to the inhabitants.

A number of well-constructed flagstone highways run across the countryside. The most noteworthy of these is the Karsican Way, which runs between Tor Gorak and the Fortress of Kas. Three lesser roads run to the west, vanishing through passes in the Burning Peaks to emerge in the domain of Cavitius. Despite the fine quality of these roads, they are rarely used.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

The Folk: The poor souls who live in Tor Gorak accept their lot in grim silence. They recognize that theirs is a harsh master and speak of the vampire Kas only in whispers and guarded tones. They know too well that the creature who rules beyond the Burning Peaks is far more terrible than their own lord.

The inhabitants of Tovag tend to have very large families, mostly because the overlord pays a decent bounty for each child born. Those who live in this domain also age at an accelerated rate. Most reach maturity after about nine years, allowing them to be conscripted into Kas's army sooner than would be possible elsewhere. Any visitors who remain in this domain for more than a month begin to age faster as well.

The Law: Kas maintains a constant war-time mentality, forcing his people to live the most meager of existences in order to save important supplies for his endless war against Vecna. He cares nothing for these people, seeing them only as instruments in the effort to destroy his former master.

Life in Tovag is dominated by routine searches of people and residences, a complete lack of personal liberties, and the crushing heel of a tyrannical police state. The state police, known as the Daggers, search continuously for traitors, spies, and criminals. The Daggers have the power to sentence and execute criminals on the spot. Little matters like evidence and guilt are seldom important in the meting out of justice.

Native Player Characters: All allowable character races and classes in Ravenloft (other than the Vistani and half-Vistani races and the gypsy class) are available here.

Due to the accelerated aging caused by this domain, native player characters have actually only lived half as long as their apparent age would indicate. Thus, Tovag natives receive a -1 penalty to their Wisdom scores. Also, the aging penalties occur in half the normal amount of time (see the **Aging Effects** tables in Appendix Two). After the character has been out of the domain for a month, the aging process slows to normal, but this does not negate the Wisdom penalty.

Life in Tor Gorak is harsh, and those who dwell under the rule of the Daggers learn to avoid the vigilant eyes of the law. As such, any native of this realm has the ability to hide in shadows like a thief. The character's chance of success begins at 50% and increases by 2% per level, to a maximum of 90%. If the character is a thief by trade, he begins play with this base (instead of that listed in the character generation section) and may use his discretionary skill points to further increase this

ability in addition to the 2% increase received with each level. The maximum chance of success for a thief character is dictated by his class, not the normal 90% limit.

Personalities of Note: Apart from the brutal Kas, the most noteworthy individuals in this domain are Tejen the Grim and Vocar the Obedient. Tejen is the master of Kas's state police and acts as the overlord's right hand in all military matters. Tejen, a 15th-level avenger, has sworn to see the lord of Cavitius destroyed because of wrongs done to his family by followers of the Maimed God. Kas appreciates the loyalty of Tejen but remembers all too well that he held a similar position before turning against Vecna so long ago.

Vocar the Obedient is a 16th-level priest of Vecna who heads a small, secret church devoted to the worship of the Chained God. The activities of this church range from recruiting new members to acting as an insurgent guerrilla force that strikes against the interests of Kas whenever possible. Vocar is the most wanted man in all of Tovag, and the Daggers search for him constantly.

Encounters: In Tor Gorak, the most dangerous encounters will likely be with Daggers, Tovag's police force. Since outsiders stand out against the backdrop of grim despair and suffering that marks this realm, they will be obvious targets for arrest, torture, and possibly execution.

Outside of the city, Tovag is not a particularly dangerous realm. To be sure, it has its share of predators, but these are the same as those found in any temperate area of similar geography. Wolves, mountain lions, and the occasional viper mark the most dangerous of this land's animals.

Within the Fortress of Kas, however, things are sure to be different. None can say what horrors might dwell there, but few are curious enough to ponder the question for long.

Further Reading: Kas the Destroyer is a major player in the adventure *Vecna Lives!*. The sword that bears his name is fully detailed in *The Book of Artifacts*.

Overlord of Tovag

Kas the Destroyer
17th-Level Ancient Vampire Avenger, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	1	Str	19
Movement	18	Dex	18
Level/ Hit Dice	17 (9+24)	Con	18
Hit Points	122	Int	18
THAC0	4	Wis	8
No. of Attacks	2	Cha	18
Damage/ Attack	1d8+12		
Special Attacks	Charm person, energy drain, shapechange, spider climb		
Special Defences	Need +3 magical weapon or better to hit, regenerate, wraithform, spell immunities		
Magic Resistance	Nil		



Background: In life, Kas was as renowned for his skill and might as he was feared for his evil and villainy. As the chief lieutenant of Vecna, Kas effectively ruled a vast empire governed through tyranny and terror. After years of loyal servitude from Kas, Vecna presented him with an extremely powerful magical sword. Created by Vecna himself, the *Sword of Kas* transformed the already legendary warrior into an archetype of evil. In time, however, the magical blade began to take its toll on the warrior's mind. Kas eventually turned on his master, determined to usurp the throne and rule for himself.

The battle between Kas and Vecna was tremendous, laying waste to the black tower in which it took place and apparently destroying both combatants. In truth, however, Kas survived this melee; he was hurled through a dimensional gate and imprisoned in Vecna's Citadel Cavitius on the Quasielemental Plane of Ash. For centuries, the defeated Kas languished there in great despair.

During his confinement, the mighty Kas changed. As the negative energies of the Citadel took their toll on his body, he gradually became a vampire. In addition, his love of conquest and triumph became a hunger for destruction and chaos. No longer was he content to be Kas the Bloody Handed or Kas the Terrible, now he would become Kas the Destroyer.

After centuries of imprisonment, Kas found himself suddenly freed when the lich was defeated in his plan to seize control of Oerth. Kas's joy at being released from his eternal confinement was quickly snuffed out, however, upon finding himself held fast by a shapeless border of Mists.

Current Sketch: Although he is unable to fully understand what power holds him in place or how he came to be here, Kas the Destroyer has found meaning in his existence. He knows that Vecna, his most hated enemy, rules a land of ash to the west of his own nation, and he seeks revenge for the time that he spent in Citadel Cavitius. Nothing, Kas has vowed, will prevent him destroying the creature who kept him prisoner for so many centuries.

Like his rival to the west, Kas constantly seeks some way to achieve military dominance over the Burning Peaks. He realizes that hurling forces into the passes between Cavitius and Tovag will win him nothing. Still, he also recognizes that this must be done if he is not to fall victim to Vecna's armies.

Kas sees only one road to victory. He believes that gaining possession of the *Sword of Kas* will give him the power he needs to destroy the overlord of Cavitius. Further, he is convinced that the sword is hidden somewhere within Tovag. With that in mind, his agents and the members of the Daggers are constantly searching for it. Little does he know, the sword is actually still on Oerth.

Closing the Borders: When Kas wills the borders of his realm closed, he summons into existence a terrible storm of whirling swords and daggers. This functions exactly as a *blade barrier* spell, inflicting 8d8 points of damage per round on anyone who attempts to wade through it. Those who try to press on will discover that they can never reach the other side and will continue to suffer damage until they retrace their steps and leave the storm of razor-edged blades.

Kas is unable to block the domain between his realm and that of Vecna. Even when he summons his blade barrier into existence, the passes through the Burning Peaks remain open.

Combat: Kas the Destroyer is a truly terrible opponent. As both a skilled warrior and an ancient vampire, he is clearly one of the most powerful domain lords in Ravenloft. Kas remembers well the thrill of combat in his mortal form. As such, he prefers to fight without using his vampiric abilities. If hard pressed, however, he will gladly resort to these tactics to ensure victory.

In most battles, Kas uses a *long sword +3*, which is only a replica of the *Sword of Kas*. This tremendously strong warrior is specialized in the use of long swords, so including his Strength modifiers, he gains a +7 bonus to his attack rolls and a +12 bonus to his damage rolls. Thus, each sucessful hit by Kas inflicts 1d8+12.

Kas is able to use his voice or gaze to charm his enemies. So powerful is the will of the Destroyer that all victims of this power suffer a -4 penalty on their saving throws to escape its effects.

Like all vampires, Kas has strong ties to the Negative Energy Plane. As such, his touch drains victims of two life energy levels. Kas is also able to regenerate wounds at a rate of four points per round. If he is reduced to 0 hit points, Kas is forced into wraithform and will flee at once. Unlike most other vampires, however, he does not have a coffin and need not retreat to any special place to recover after such a defeat.

Sleep, charm, hold, and other mind- or body-affecting spells and powers have no effect upon Kas. In addition, he suffers only half-damage from spells and attacks based on cold or electricity.

Kas is able to spider climb as per the spell at any time and alter his shape at will, becoming a bat. Once in any twenty-four-hour period, Kas can use this ability to change shape and heal all damage incurred to that point. As a vampire, he can also call wolves, bats, and rats to his aid whenever he desires it. When he does this, he can opt to summon 10d100 bats, 10d100 rats, or 3d6 wolves. Bats will arrive in 2d6 round, rats in 1d10 rounds, and wolves in 2d4 rounds.

Whenever Kas the Destroyer wishes to, he can assume a gaseous state that protects him from harm. In this form, he can pass through cracks in walls, flow through keyholes, and otherwise avoid any barrier that is not air tight. In most ways, this ability mimics the spell of the same name. Because of Kas's power, however, he retains his resistance to weapons of less than a +3 enchantment (save for *holy avengers*, as for Vecna). Further, Kas cannot be forced out of his wraithform by spells like *dispel magic*.

Kas is unable to enter a dwelling or other structure without being invited to do so by its owner. Because the laws of Tovag state clearly that all places and things belong to Kas, this seldom has any effect upon him.

Kas is free of many of the traditional weaknesses that have plagued his kind over the centuries. Holy water, holy symbols, garlic, and mirrors do not affect him. He has no need to maintain a coffin and suffers no harm from immersion in running water. The rays of the sun, however, are just as deadly to this vampire as they are to all his kin. Indeed, pure radiance can

instantly annihilate him. This demise is not permanent, though, for Kas will reform in 1d100 nights and seek vengeance on those who dared to expose him to the burning sun. Weapons and spells that do damage to the undead by imitating the effects of the sun have double their normal effect on Kas.

Most vampires can be truly slain only by having a wooden stake driven into their heart and then being beheaded, burned, or otherwise having their bodies destroyed. The same is true of Kas, but the wood used to fashion the stake on which he is impaled must have been cut from a tree growing in the soil of his homeworld, Oerth. Thus, no stake fashioned in Tovag will harm the vampire Kas.

Zherisia

Zherisia is a unique Cluster insofar as its domains are stacked, rather than existing side by side. These two domains are respectively called Paridon and Timor.

Prior to the Grand Conjunction, Zherisia existed as an independent Island of Terror. However, when the lands of the Demiplane were shuffled around, the teeming city of Paridon separated from Zherisia, and the sewer system transformed dramatically. Efforts to explore these new sewers met with mysterious accidents and disasters, and surviving explorers returned hopelessly insane, driven mad by unknown horrors. Still, the sewers functioned correctly, so the ruling class of Paridon soon forgot all about it.

Under the city, the sewers now form a separate, secret domain. Once located under the city of Timor, these sewers are ruled by the Hive Queen and her predatory marikith spawn. Prior to the Grand Conjunction, these monsters had depopulated a city of thirty thousand people. Recently, however, the new hunting ground of Paridon was provided for them. (The vacant city of Timor may still exist somewhere in the Mists, but its sewers are definitely part of the Zherisia Cluster now.)

Paridon

The Land: The city of Paridon was once surrounded by rich farmland in a tiny domain known as Zherisia. However, the Grand Conjunction caused the Island to shrink, so now this city makes up the entire domain.

The city of Paridon is always covered in a persistent fog. The Misty Border hangs thick on the outskirts of the city, and a damp haze hangs forever in the city streets.

The city is a maze of cobblestone streets and dark brick structures with narrow windows. Riders are not often seen in Paridon, but carriages are a common sight. In fact, it is unusual to be anywhere in the city where the sounds of beating hooves and rumbling wheels are not echoing off the buildings.

Once the fields vanished, the citizens began growing food in small, sickly gardens located in parks and on rooftops. These sources were supplemented with fishing in the Nodnal River that bisects the city. Further, those creatures once viewed as pets or vermin are now considered acceptable food sources.

Starvation was at one time rampant among the city's poor, though the city constables always saw to it that the gentlemen and ladies of Paridon were well fed. In recent years, however, the food problem has solved itself. Though food has not become more abundant, the population has decreased. The citizens of Paridon are somehow disappearing. The truth of the matter is that in addition to the domain shrinking, Paridon's sewage system was replaced with an independent domain. Within those winding tunnels dwell monstrous creatures that feed off human flesh.

Aside from those who have vanished, the greatest loss caused by this crisis is the death of Paridon's night life. Once, the pubs here rang with song and laughter, and the rich drove to parties in their ornate carriages. Now, once the sun goes down, Paridions huddle around their fireplaces, fearful of the dark.

Cultural Level: Renaissance.

The Folk: The folk of Paridon divide along rigid class lines. Gentlemen and ladies live in elegant estates surrounded by

landscaped grounds. The lower class residents usually work in various trades or as servants for the wealthy. Although some own shops, their modest wealth does not allow them to associate with the upper class. Below the lower class are the destitute. Some wind up on the streets as beggars or petty thieves, while others find different ways to keep from starving to death.

The men of Paridon wear dark woolen pants, cotton shirts, high button boots, and heavy cloaks or capes to keep off the ever-present moisture. Gentlemen wear black top hats, while men of the lower classes wear simple cloth caps.

Most women wear somber-colored long dresses, high- button boots, and hats. (It is considered indecent for a woman to reveal an ankle and improper for her to be outside without a hat.) While outdoors, they wear capes to keep off the damp air. Women of the lower classes wear simple bonnets, but upper-class ladies boast large-brimmed, elaborate hats.

The vast majority of Paridonions do not believe in gods. Instead, they follow a philosophy referred to as the "Divinity of Humanity". Held to be far more civilized than a belief in anthropomorphic supernatural entities, this philosophy states that humanity (including human crossbreeds, such as half-elves and half-Vistani) alone among sentient races is near-divine and should do all it can to achieve perfection - physical, mental, and emotional. The underpinnings of these beliefs consist of extremely convoluted conjectures and hypotheses.

Aside from the obvious human population of Paridon, two other hidden, yet known, factions thrive here as well. First, Paridon has several doppleganger clans. Their presence was revealed to the human citizens when a group of adventurers exposed them during a rash of murders a few years ago. The second hidden population is a growing pack of jackalweres.

In regard to the missing citizens, some speculate that the dopplegangers are up to their old tricks again, but reports of strange shadows snaking out of the sewer grates and devouring people where they stand seems to discount that theory. Between these two races of shapeshifters and the growing number of disappearances, the people of Paridon grow increasingly paranoid.

Native Player Characters: Paridon has consisted exclusively of settled lands for many decades, so more nature oriented classes (like rangers) are unknown here. Also, wizards are highly unusual. The most common characters in Paridon are rogues and warriors. Native priests all follow the philosophy known as the Divinity of Mankind. Priests of this faith cast spells according to the standard rules presented in this volume and may be of any neutral alignment. A player character priest must, of course, meet the standard class minimums as well as have an Intelligence of 14 or better in order to properly argue the tenets of this philosophy with other priests. Priests of this faith cannot turn undead.

Regardless of class, player characters native to Paridon all gain the etiquette nonweapon proficiency for free.

The Law: Paridon is governed by a nine-member Council elected by the gentlemen of the city every five years. The lower classes have no voice in the government, although they can petition council members with requests and complaints. Naturally, it was this council that decreed food must be secured for the upper class before feeding the remaining inhabitants of the city. On a more positive note, the council has also taken steps to prevent further disappearances; now the wealthy are required to provide more money to the city coffers for use in hiring additional constables. The officers now patrol in groups of three in order to minimize the chance of doppleganger attacks.

Encounters: Paridon has no indigenous monsters, but the creatures of Timor frequently rise to the surface. So far, the overlord of Paridon has made no effort to stop these incursions, and he may not yet be aware of them.

Further Reading: The adventure module *Hour of the Knife* includes a detailed map of Paridon's West End, as well as a murder mystery.

Overlord of Paridon

Sodo
Ravenloft Doppleganger, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	5	Str	19
Movement	12	Dex	18
Level/ Hit Dice	5	Con	16
Hit Points	40	Int	18
THAC0	15	Wis	17
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	10
Damage/ Attack	1d12 per round		
Special Attacks	Strangulation		
Special Defences	Need +5 or better magical weapon to hit		
Magic Resistance	90% immunity to all damaging spells		

Although he is a Ravenloft doppleganger with the ability to mimic any humanoid form, Sodo cannot hold a single shape for more than a few moments. When he is calm, he can hold a shape for a full minute, but when he is agitated or excited, he flickers from shape to shape every two or three seconds. Many of the humanoid shapes Sodo assumes are bestial and horrific, so seeing him often requires a horror check.

Background: Sodo originally belonged to a clan of dopplegangers on a distant world. Sodo, his fellow clan members, and his city were drawn into Ravenloft when he committed a horrific crime - even by doppleganger standards. In a series of carefully arranged "accidents", Sodo killed all the dopplegangers in his clan who were older than himself. After disposing of all the other elders, Sodo killed the clan leader, hid the body, and assumed the leader's most common form.

When confronted by suspicious younger members of his clan, Sodo used his mimicry to assume the natural form of the doppleganger elder, adding extra creases under his eyes like the aged clan leader. Normally, a doppleganger is not able to mimic another doppleganger's true form, but Sodo had magical help: *a hat of disguise*.

When Sodo and the city of Paridon were drawn into Ravenloft, Sodo was rewarded with the ability to mimic any humanoid shape, even that of a fellow doppleganger. At the same time, he was cursed to be forever shifting shape and to heal anyone he tries to harm.

Current Sketch: For decades Sodo has been the undisputed leader of Paridon's doppleganger clans, but now his position has become precarious. The head of one of those clans, Sir Edmund Bloodsworth, has betrayed him. Not only is Bloodsworth in league with a pack of jackalweres, he has also claimed the fang of the nosferatu, the magical knife that has granted Sodo invulnerability for the past one hundred fifty-six years. If Sir Edmund succeeds in obtaining the invulnerability the knife bestows, nothing will stop him from deposing Sodo and becoming the new lord of Paridon.

Closing the Borders: When Sodo wants to close his borders, the Mists prevent exit. They fill the alleys at the domain's outskirts, and no matter which direction a would-be escapee travels in, he finds himself heading back toward the heart of the domain as soon as he enters the Mists.

Combat: Sodo has the usual ESP powers of a Ravenloft doppleganger, but he is addicted to the pain and terror of his victims. He must experience these emotions at least every five days or suffer intense pain himself.

To feed on the suffering of his victims, Sodo must touch them. Because accurately aiming a weapon is difficult for him as he rapidly shirts shape, he prefers to strangle his victims. He can usually hang on long enough to finish this. At the same time, Sodo's touch eases pain and ultimately resurrects any who die (as per the resurrection spell but without any aging or weakening of Sodo). As a result, the victims always survive his attacks, no matter how violent. Host believe they have merely suffered a frightening nightmare.

Timor

The Land: Under the twisting streets of Paridon lies an even more complicated maze of darkened tunnels. These circular tunnel range in circumference from four feet to a massive twelve feet. Here and there, the stench of Paridon's refuse becomes overwhelming, and a strange haze fills the tunnels, obscuring vision and limiting light sources (even magical) to a range of fifteen feet.

Cultural Level: Stone Age.

The Folk: The only creatures who prowl Timor are the marikith, who are almost unknown in Ravenloft outside this domain. No one knows for sure how many marikith exist.

Marikith are the spawn of the Hive Queen, the overlord of Timor. These hulking, musclebound humanoids have leathery, black skin and glowing red eyes. However, they are capable of shielding this glow, so victims frequently do not realize they are surrounded by a pack of marikith until it is too late. Further, their tough skin masks body heat, so characters with infravision have only a 25% chance to spot a marikith in the dark.

These nightmarish creatures hunt in packs, shambling through the sewers under Paridon and occasionally emerging onto the surface to sate their ravenous hunger tor human flesh. Marikith fight with their razor-sharp claws and incisors, preferring to snatch their victims off the streets and drag them into the sewer where they may devour them at will. Even if the victim fights back, the marikiths' thick skin protects them. They suffer only 1 point of damage per successful attack from nonmagical, blunt weapons and half damage from nonmagical, edged weapons per hit. The same is true of magical weapons, except that the magical bonus is added to the damage. (*Swords of sharpness* and *vorpal blades* do full damage.)

The marikith prefer to fight in darkness, for their entire lives are spent in the murky sewers. They suffer a -4 penalty to all attack rolls in bright light, and a -2 penalty in dim light. The marikith are accomplished mimics, capable of duplicating virtually any sound. They also have the ability to sense fear in a victim, and while hiding in the shadows, they make sounds they believe will frighten the victim the most. They find their victims' fear almost as lush as the taste of their blood.

Marikith have two classes: the hunters and the Queen. However, each hive has only one queen, and only one hive is known to exist in Ravenloft.

> **Marikith:** AC 3; MV 15; HD 3+2; THAC0 16; #AT 3 (claw/claw/bite); Dmg 1-6/1-6/1-8; SD thick hide (reduced damage from weapons); SZ M (6'-7'); ML elite (14); Int low (6); AL LE; XP 420.

Native Player Characters: There are no player characters native to this domain.

Personalities of Note: The Hive Queen is the only character of note in Timor.

The Law: The Hive Queen reigns supreme in Timor. The marikith are all linked to her telepathically, and they are incapable of disobeying her wishes.

Encounters: For each turn they spend in the sewers beneath Paridon, the heroes have a 5% chance of encountering a pack of 2d10 marikith. Once the heroes have been detected, the creatures attack in ever-increasing waves, with each wave increasing by six. (Should the heroes defeat the first group encountered, 2d10+6 marikith attack, followed by 2d10+12, and so on, until the heroes either are destroyed or flee.)

Further Reading: The adventure module *Hour of the Knife* includes a detailed map of Paridon's West End, as well as a murder mystery.

Overlord of Timor

The Hive Queen
Marikith Queen, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	-3	Str	18
Movement	15	Dex	8
Level/ Hit Dice	13	Con	20
Hit Points	93	Int	20
THAC0	7	Wis	11
No. of Attacks	6	Cha	3
Damage/ Attack	1-8/1-8/1-8/1-8/1-10/1-10		
Special Attacks	Grapple, poison		
Special Defences	Control of marikiths		
Magic Resistance	20%		



The Hive Queen is roughly eleven feet in length. An almost-humanoid torso extends from her abhorrent arachnid abdomen, which is supported by four legs. The other four arms project from her ribcage. Her hide is jet-black, mottled with venomous red and orange splotches. Thin, muddy hair hangs about her head in an oily corona, and long fangs protrude from her too-wide mouth, dripping venom continuously. Her eyes glow red, like macabre jack-o-lanterns, and her poisonous stinger becomes even more dangerous with each egg she lays, as the toxic shells leave a residue on the stinger.

To find the Hive Queen of Timor, a hero must descend into the very heart of the domain and battle hoards of marikith. Additionally, the mere sight of this monstrous overlord requires an immediate horror check with a -3 penalty.

Background: Centuries ago, the woman who would become the Hive Queen was heir to a royal house. Her mother, the queen, had taxed her people into starvation and poverty so that she might build the most splendid city the world had ever seen in a place where no one believed it possible to build a city - atop a marikith hive, the most dangerous predators her world knew.

The young princess was aware of the suffering of her people, but she felt no sympathy for them. Instead, she hated them and her mother both. She blamed the peasants for not being capable of supporting her mother's extravagant dreams, and she blamed her mother for driving the kingdom of weaklings into ruin. Though the princess wanted to destroy her mother, she was unable to develop a plan in which she, herself, would come to no harm.

The answer came one night from her lover, a noble who led the Royal Marikith Hunters. He revealed to her that the true reason the queen insisted on building her city over a marikith lair was because she feared those creatures more than anything. However, the proud queen wanted to prove to herself and those who knew of this fear that she was beyond such emotions. From this knowledge grew the princess's plot.

First, the princess seduced one of the court wizards. As they lay together under the stars, the princess convinced him to cast a spell that would seemingly transform her into a marikith queen in front of her mother, hoping that the fright would kill the aging queen. Her scheme was scheduled to take place on the night of the Royal Ball in the new palace, celebrating the completion of the grand city.

Before the ball, the princess had a secret rendezvous with her real lover to see to it that none of his hunters would be present at the ball. (She did not want to be accidentally slain because of the illusion.) Unfortunately for the princess, their rendezvous was witnessed by the wizard. The spellcaster was consumed by humiliation and rage and decided to take revenge.

At the height of the festivities, the princess rose and gave a speech in honor of her mother and the great city she had built. As she finished her speech, the wizard cast his spell, and pain soared through the princess's body. The party was thrown into chaos as she was transformed into a marikith queen, and her mother collapsed, dead from fright just as the princess had planned.

The princess's exultation was short-lived, however. The wizard triumphantly announced that she was now as hideous on the outside as she was on the inside. In a mirror along one of the walls, the princess saw her new, hideous form - that of a marikith queen with a human head. She then realized that the wizard had not cast an illusion; he had physically transformed her. When the wizard refused to return her to her natural form, she killed him.

That first murder sent her into a killing rage. Soon, she was rampaging through the city, killing everyone she found. Eventually, her lover and his hunters forced her to retreat to the safety of the sewers, but as she did, vapors rose around her. The Mists of Ravenloft had claimed her.

Current Sketch: The Hive Queen quickly adapted to her current state of existence. Though the vain princess is mortally ashamed of her appearance, she is generally content with the domain of Timor. She views the marikith as superior beings, far above those subjects she might have ruled on her homeworld. They are perfectly obedient and can feed themselves.

Hive Queen is deathly afraid of laying an egg that might produce a queen to replace her. For this reason, she destroys all fledgling queens that hatch.

Closing the Borders: When the Hive Queen wishes to close off her domain, corrosive, putrid clouds fill the tunnels that lead to and from the sewers. Any character who tries to push through them suffers 2d4 points of damage each round from exposure and must make a successful saving throw vs. poison or be paralyzed until the clouds dissipate. The marikith are immune to this effect.

Combat: If heroes manage to penetrate the waves of marikith, the Hive Queen first attempts a retreat to one of the many holes that surround her lair. If she cannot, she will stand and fight. In combat, she may use any weapons with her four hands and also attack with two of her four legs. Alternatively, she may choose to grapple her attackers and bite them. If she scores successful attacks with two of her hands, she may also attempt a bite. Victims of her poisonous bite must make successful saving throws vs. poison with a -4 penalty or die.

Finally, if in dire straights, she may attempt to sting her opponents, though this leaves her soft abdomen vulnerable to attack (AC 0). If she manages to sting an opponent, he must make a successful saving throw vs. poison with a -4 penalty or fall into a catatonic trance for one week. During this time, his skin hardens and turns black, and his body transforms. At the end of the week, the victim will rise as a marikith under the queen's control. (If the queen is dead, the new marikith will be free-willed.) During the first week, a *neutralize poison* followed by a *remove curse* can prevent this from occurring. Once the transformation is complete, only a *wish* can restore the character to his original state.

Pockets

Put simply, Pockets are domains located within other domains. (The exceptions to this classification are those islands domains within the Sea of Sorrows and the Nocturnal Sea, which are classified as Core domains.) Pocket domains usually consist of only the domain lord, called a demilord, and a small plot of ground or maybe a single building. Thus, the dark soul at the center of a Pocket domain is definitely a prisoner - perhaps even more so than any other domain lords.

Though many Pocket domains reside in a set geographical position, this is not always the case. A special kind of Pocket, called a Floating domain, actually moves from place to place, often displacing a small portion of another lord's domain. Rare Floating domains may even materialize on the Prime Material Plane. Another terrifying aspect of a Floating domain is the fact that when it moves, it can take those within its boundaries along, whether the demilord has closed the borders or not.

One of the most terrifying Pocket domains is the Winding Road, where the seemingly indestructible phantom known as the Headless Horseman thunders eternally along a lonely stretch of road, followed closely by the heads of all the travelers he has decapitated. Another example of a Pocket is Leedrik's Tower, the lair of a foul being called the Phantom Lover, who eases the pain of lonely, love-sick, or mourning women by taking their lives.

This section contains information on Davion, the House of Lament, the Nightmare Lands, and Scaena.

The Land: Under the twisting streets of Paridon lies an even more complicated maze of darkened tunnels. These circular tunnel range in circumference from four feet to a massive twelve feet. Here and there, the stench of Paridon's refuse becomes overwhelming, and a strange haze fills the tunnels, obscuring vision and limiting light sources (even magical) to a range of fifteen feet.

Davion

This strange Pocket actually exists within the borders of another Pocket domain. Davion lies inside one of the dreamspheres in the Nightmare Lands, a Floating domain described later in this chapter.

Davion is ruled by four powerful psyches, victims of a Loish spell gone awry. These four spirits now battle for control of a single body. The domain changes its nature, appearance, and inhabitants depending on which psyche is dominant. Davion consists of a small village of roughly thirty structures surrounded by approximately five square miles of territory. In each version, however, the village has a different name and a vastly different character.

When Davion controls the body, his subconscious anguish over his fate causes the village to look as if it had been recently devastated by an earthquake. The homeless inhabitants pick through the ruins for food and clothing. They believe their home to be named Thornewood.

When Augustus the mage controls the body, the village is called Arcanon. It has red brick streets and clapboard houses. This quiet town is a wizard's dream, with shops that can provide any research material or spell component on a moment's notice. The well-mannered inhabitants all dress immaculately, and the weather always stays overcast and pleasantly cool.

When the warrior Boromar emerges, the inhabitants think they live in Boromar's Knoll, a frontier community. The homes and businesses are built from logs, and the streets are dirt roads with shallow ruts. The locals are hardy frontier folk who dress in leathers and furs. Here, the sky is clear, but the temperature always hovers near freezing.

Narana is a priestess of Loviatar (a goddess of pain), and when she is the dominant personality, the village is known as Pallatia. It is home to red brick structures with slate roofs, the largest of which is a large temple to Loviatar. The inhabitants are hedonists - and usually also sadists and masochists to lesser or greater degree. The clothing style consists of skimpy, translucent silks or daring black leathers covered with spikes. Warm and breezy weather, reminiscent of late spring, prevails here.

The personalities surface and fade without warning or notice, so characters trapped in Davion find themselves in an ever-changing world of madness. To end this instability, characters must find a way to separate the four personalities from each other. Unfortunately, most of them refuse to believe they are sharing a body with three others, and none will be cooperative.

Cultural Level: Medieval.

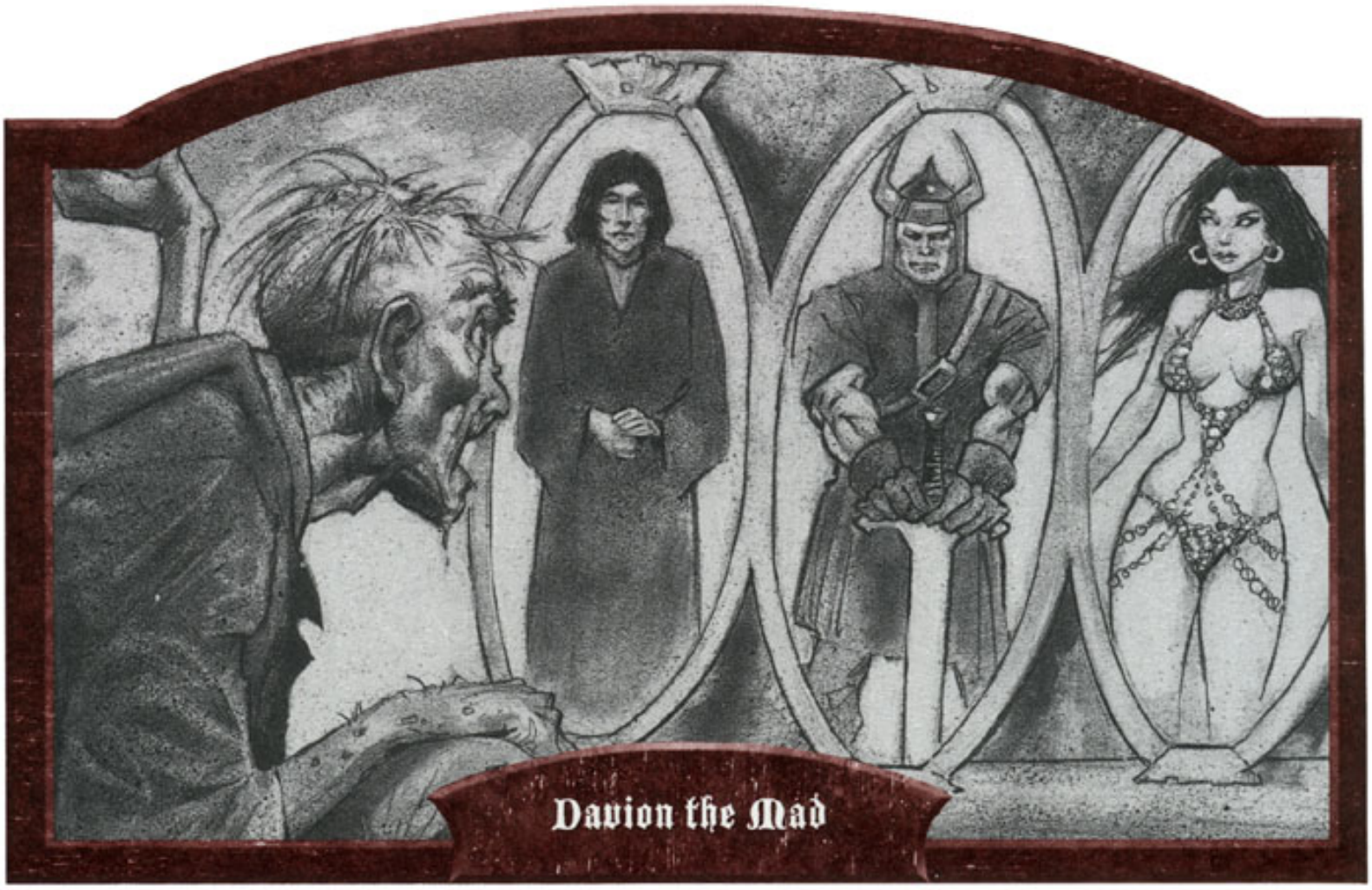
The Folk: The inhabitants vary depending on which of the lord's personalities is dominant. However, none of the villagers realize that their surroundings are inconstant.

Native Player Characters: There are no player characters native from Davion.

Encounters: Since this domain consists mainly of the town, the villagers are almost the only living inhabitants. Significantly, four times per day the town and inhabitants have a 50% of changing as one of the lord's other personalities surfaces.

Further Reading: Full details on Davion and its changing faces are presented in the *Book of Crypts* game accessory.

Lord of Davion



Davion the Mad
15th-Level Human Mage, Chaotic Evil

Armor Class	2	Str	14
Movement	12	Dex	16
Level/ Hit Dice	15	Con	15
Hit Points	100	Int	19
THAC0	11	Wis	16
No. of Attacks	1 (or 3/2 like Boromar)	Cha	17
Damage/ Attack	By weapon		
Special Attacks	Abilities of other three personalities, spells (5/5/5/5/5/2/1)		
Special Defences	Nil		
Magic Resistance	Nil		

Though Davion is the true lord of this domain, he shares his rulership with Boromar, Narana, and Augustus. Of the three, only Davion knows the truth about their predicament.

Background: Davion was once a powerful and well-known mage. His scope of arcane knowledge spanned all of the eight schools of magic, yet he lusted for still more knowledge and power at any price. He hired three people - Boromar, Narana, and Augustus - to search the world over for artifacts, scrolls, books, and whatever else they could find.

While they were searching, Davion discovered a *ring of two wishes*. However, before he could finish uttering his carefully worded wish, his hirelings interrupted him. Without thinking, Davion turned to them and demanded that they give him everything they had. Instantly, the ring granted that wish, combining the four individuals into Davion's body.

The combined power of these four individuals was such that they could actually control reality directly around them. The appearance of both their surroundings and the body they shared changed according to which personality was dominant at the time. As the only personality aware of their situation, however, Davion could access the abilities and knowledge of the others. Unfortunately, this sudden influx of power and information drove him quite mad.

Eventually, a group of well-meaning adventurers attempted to help separate these personalities. Recognizing the danger to his new source of power, Davion mercilessly slaughtered the heroes one by one. At the conclusion of this brutal act, the Mists rolled in to claim him.

Current Sketch: Davion, Boromar, Narana, and Augustus spend about equal time in control of the domain. Davion is still the only one who recognizes their situation.

Boromar looks like a heavily-armed fighter in ornately engraved full plate. He is a reclusive, mysterious character, continually talking and grumbling to himself as though complaining to an invisible ally. Whether out of caution or paranoia, he often whirls about on his heels to make sure no one is following him.

Narana appears as a slender woman in her twenties, dressed in skimpy and thoroughly impractical armor resembling scale mail. Dozens of delicate chains dangle from her dark hair and around her neck, cascading over her body. She is an extremely loud and rude woman, often using profanity and crude innuendoes. As a priestess of Loviatar, she is always there to help those who have been injured, but not necessarily as they would like. Instead of aiding with healing spells or kind words, she kicks, claws, and whips them - anything to create more pain and suffering for her deity.

Augustus is a slender, middle-aged man dressed in dark robes. He is quiet, blunt, impatient, and very quick to point out the ignorance of others. His statements are always short and to the point. He hates wasting time listening to convoluted stories, often rudely interrupting to demand that the speaker get to the point.

Davion currently exists as a haggard, rag-clad lunatic who flees from the scene should any character approach him. Most of the time, Davion is obsessed with increasing his power even more. He regrets murdering the adventurers, thinking that he should have instead tried to add them to his collection of souls. Since Narana has the ring containing the remaining wish spell, Davion has been researching other ways to merge new personalities into his body.

Closing the Borders: Only Davion has the ability to close the borders. Whenever Davion wishes, characters find it impossible to leave the town. Whenever the city disappears behind them, it appears on the horizon ahead. No matter which direction try to go, they always find themselves heading back toward town.

Combat: When Davion is in control of the body, he can access the fighting and spell capabilities of the other three personalities. During combat, there is a 5% chance each round that a different personality will take over, completely healing all wounds the body has taken. If one of the personalities is ever killed, the Dungeon Master should randomly determine which of the others appears. Unless all four personalities are completely destroyed, "dead" personalities reappear in 1d4 days.

> **Boromar**, hm F10: AC -1; MV 12; hp 100; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg ld8+4 (long sword +4, defender, he can opt to use the +4 bonus as defense or as any combination of attack and defense bonuses totalling +4); SA +2 attack bonus and +3 damage bonus due to Strength; SD can magically retrieve his dropped sword in one round; SZ M; AL CN. S 18/55, D 15, C 18,1 14, W 16, Ch 17. Special Equipment: full plate mail +2.

Narana, hf P16 (Loviatar): AC 3 (bracers of defense AC 3); MV 12; hp 100; THAC0 10; #AT 1 (poisoned fingernails); Dmg 1d2+poison (Type N); SA priest spells (10/9/9/7/4/3/1); SZ M; AL CE. S 16, D 15, C 18,1 14, W 19, Ch 17. Special Equipment: ring of one wish.

Augustus, hm Ml 2: AC 3 (robe of protection +3); MV 12; hp 100; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+3 (rod of smiting}; SA spells (4/4/4/4/4/1); SZ M; AL LN. S 14, D 19, C 15, 1 18, W 16, Ch 17.

Davion's spell list: 1st level - all from *Player's Handbook*.
2nd level - all from *Player's Handbook*.
3rd level - all from *Player's Handbook*.
4th level - *confusion, dig, fear, fire trap, fumble, ice storm, illusionary wall, improved invisibility, massmorph, plant growth, polymorph self, shadow monsters, solid fog, vacancy, wall of ice, wizard eye*.
5th level - *advanced illusion, chaos, cone of cold, domination, false vision, feeblemind, hold monster, passwall, sending, shadow magic, stone shape, telekinesis, wall offeree*.
6th level - *chain lightning, disintegrate, globe of invulnerability, Invisible stalker, mass suggestion, project image, repulsion, Tenser's transformation, veil*.
7th level - *Bigby's grasping hand, delayed blast fireball, finger of death, limited wish, power word stun, spell turning, vanish, vision*.

The House of Lament

Some domain lords are not humanoid, and in some rare instances, the domain and the lord are one and the same. Such is the case with the House of Lament, which is located in southwestern Borca.

The Land: It is perpetually autumn in this Pocket, which is extremely disconcerting for those who stumble into it during summer, spring, or winter in the surrounding domain of Borca. By day the sky is heavy and dark, but at night, the clouds often coalesce, becoming a fierce storm.

A high, thick stone wall around the house marks the boundaries of this domain. A moat encircles the wall on the inner side, filled with brackish water and decaying leaves. The narrow yard within is filled with black, leafless oaks which stand guard over a tangled lawn overgrown with slender, arching vines. These vines and trees seem to move of their own accord, often reaching out hostilely.

The house is built from cut stone, with a round tower at the corner. Dark, tall windows on the second level stare out at the grounds below. Gray lichens cover the entire surface of the house, creating tiny fissures along the face of the rock.

Beyond the front door lies a two-story foyer with a huge chandelier and a black, curving staircase with heavy rails. The spindles of the staircase resemble wood nymphs, though the faces are hideous. Near the ceiling, on the outer wall, a tall Gothic window with crimson panes bleeds red light into the room.

This mansion has a bewildering number of dark rooms and corridors, all richly appointed, but dust-filled and obviously abandoned for some time. Many of the first-floor rooms have no windows, so they are always extremely dark. Even on the second floor, the walls are so deep that the windows still give off very little light.

Visitors to the House of Lament soon become aware that they are far from alone in this structure. It is readily apparent that some malignant intelligence infuses every item contained within.

Cultural Level: Chivalric.

Native Player Characters: There are no player characters from the House of Lament.

Encounters: Any characters who enter this domain will be targeted by the evil entity that inhabits the House of Lament. At first, the house begins to manifest easily explained sounds and sights, slowly wearing down the victim's resolve. Eventually, the house will single one of the characters out for absorption.

Gradually, the house reveals itself to be alive. The wind whispering through the cracks in the walls and chimneys changes to the slow rhythm of inhalation and exhalation, as the house begins to breathe. Characters will faintly hear a distant pounding, like a muffled heartbeat. Doors open and shut of their own accord, with locks thrown across them. Sconces light and extinguish randomly. Floorboards creak as though someone were walking on them. Most importantly, distant sounds of crying and screaming echo throughout the halls.

With the passage of time, the phenomena become even more dangerous and unsettling. Nooses appear in doorways and from the chandeliers. Cold winds sweep through the house, actually causing damage. Mists even creep up from the floorboards, putting the characters to sleep.

At this point, the house will begin to speak to its captives, with messages in blood. Red words drip down the walls, proclaiming, "Mara is lonely". The house also addresses some of these messages to the character it has chosen to keep.

At night, an unseen phantom pounds at the doors, until reaching the room where the visitors are staying. The door will bend inward toward the characters, shaking under the tremendous force of the beating. Anyone foolish enough to open the door feels a wave of pestilent breath, forcing him to the floor and causing 2d10+4 points of damage. Even if the victim lives through this attack, he appears dead for 1d4 rounds.

Characters must make successful saving throws vs. spell each hour to stay awake at night. Once asleep, their dreams are influenced by the house itself, which uses its intended victim to torment dreams of the other characters. The victim's friends usually dream of the character's death. The favored victim also seems to age overnight, though these effects slowly vanish if the character leaves the domain. However, escape is far from easy.

Further Reading: For complete details on the House of Lament, see the game accessory *Darklords*.

Demilord of the House of Lament

This unique domain is actually ruled by the evil spirit of the House of Lament itself. This spirit has merged with the restless spirit of Mara, a young woman who was murdered here long ago.



Background: Centuries ago, an aging lord offered his beautiful, young daughter Mara in marriage to a local bandit leader in exchange for peace. Dranzorg the bandit lord agreed, but he attacked the caravan anyway and kidnapped Mara. He then claimed that she had never arrived and used this as an excuse to continue his attacks on the inhabitants with new vigor.

Dranzorg interned Mara alive in one of the towers of his keep as a sacrifice to the gods. He believed that the slow lingering death of a human being within the walls would help make them impervious to assault. Her screams continued for days after she should have been dead. When they finally reopened her tomb, no one lay within.

Soon after, the bandit lord and his men began hearing a woman's voice calling to them, but any who heeded the call met with a gruesome fate. Eventually, they were all dead.

The castle was abandoned for centuries, and much of it collapsed - all except for the tower in which Mara had been entombed. A rich merchant admired the look of the tower and attached a great house to its side. He moved his family into it, but they too died one by one. This same fate awaits all who dare occupy the house.

Current Sketch: The spirit of the House of Lament is an evil entity of which Mara is only a part. Its goal is to absorb spirits into its walls, so that Mara will not be alone. Thus, it refuses to release visitors unless someone dies within.

When the bandit lord bricked Mara into the wall, he infused the structure with a sensitivity to Mara's suffering. As the young girl slowly died alone in the dark, she felt intensely lonely. Her restless spirit, now insane beyond any hope of rationality, has become one with the house and is still lost in that desolation. Although the house has absorbed many victims over the years, none have been sufficient to quell Mara's loneliness. Perhaps none ever will.

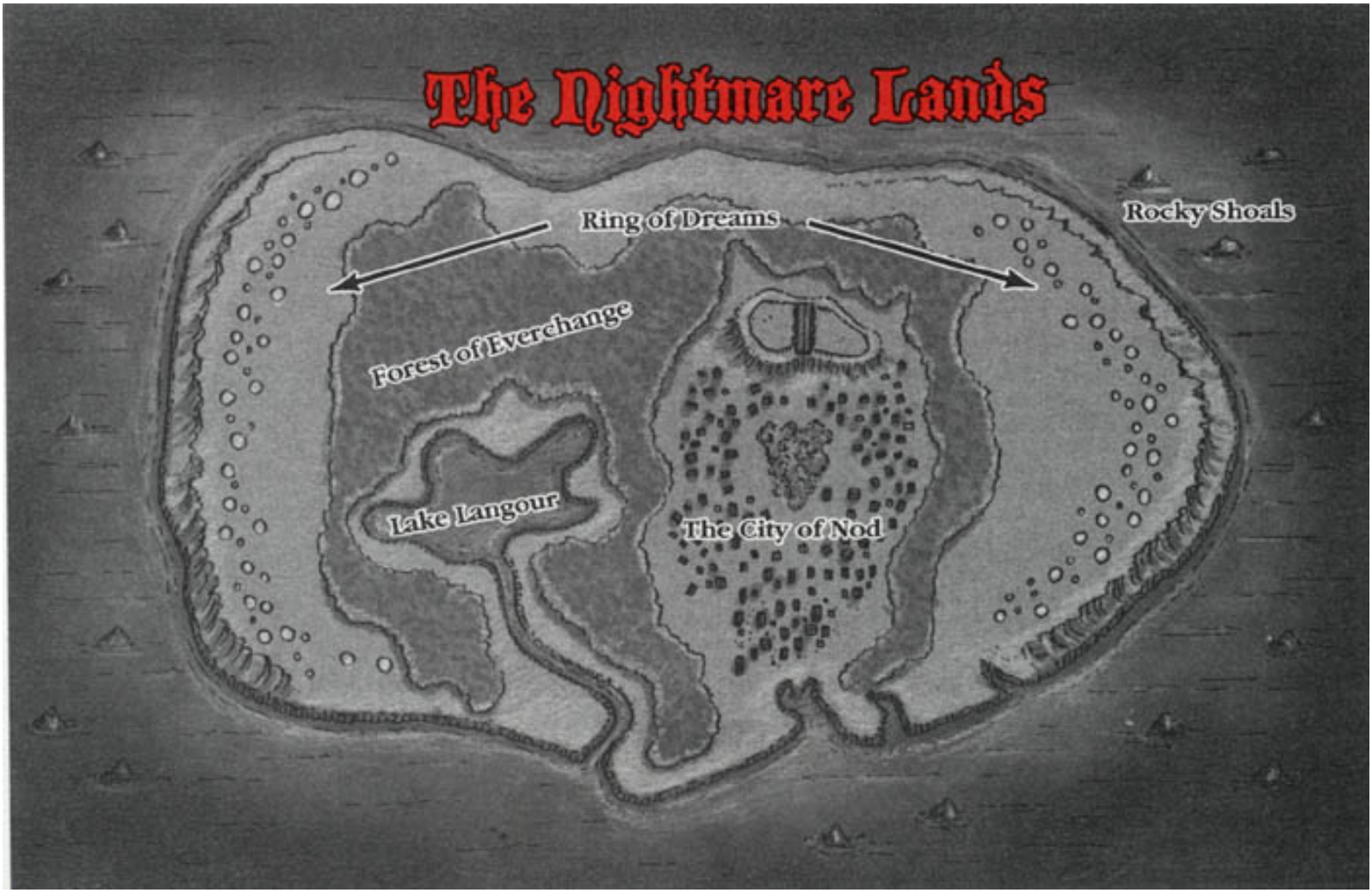
In many ghost stories, the haunting ends when the body of the suffering spirit is laid to rest. However, if the characters open Mara's tomb in the tower, they find the bandit lord's skeleton, not hers. As noted above, the house does not release its guests unless on of them dies within it. Usually, the victim is a nonplayer character. If a player character sacrifices himself nobly and willingly, the house could possibly be destroyed.

Closing the Borders: The house wants at least one victim before allowing anyone to leave. Until then, doors refuse to open, and windows refuse to break. Every part of the house can be used to prevent escape. Stairs can warp and twist, and floors can even open and form a giant maw, releasing horrid creatures from the Negative Material Plane.

Combat: The house cannot be harmed by fire, cold, or electricity. Piercing and bludgeoning weapons merely cause the walls to bleed, but the red, sticky fluid quickly changes to black. It slips down the walls and onto the floor, where it become the equivalent of gray ooze. If sufficient damage is inflicted on the house, it can create a blood elemental from its wounds (see the *RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II*).

The Nightmare Lands

The Land: In this domain, the lines between reality and dreams are blurred. The terrain alters so quickly that it almost seems alive. The sky changes color, the sun changes size, and the air changes temperature. Each metamorphosis is smooth and seamless, usually occurring at the corner of the viewer's field of vision. Much of this domain is covered by forest, though it is truly trackless. No trail can form in this unstable country.



At the heart of this ever-shifting forest lies the City of Nod. This ruined metropolis is devoid of life, save for the staff and patients of the Clinic for the Mentally Distressed, drawn here through the mighty powers of the land's rulers, the Nightmare Court. Dr. Illhousen, the clinic's chief physician, attempted to challenge the Nightmare Court and lost. The court then claimed him and all of his patients.

The forest itself is surrounded by a blasted wasteland, the exact features of which are ever-changing. The one constant landmark here is the Ring of Dreams, a collection of thousands of glistening spheres that range in diameter from three to three hundred feet. Each one of these contains a dreamscape, a pocket dimension where nightmares unfold. A person can look into these spheres and see what appears to be worlds in miniature. The curious should beware, however, as those who gaze too long into these dreamscapes may be drawn into them, never to be retrieved. Within one of these dreamspheres lies the domain of Davion.

The Nightmare Lands are as unstable as a dream. This Floating domain moves throughout the Misty Border, sometimes even appearing in the Nocturnal Sea. While in this eastern sea, the island is surrounded by shoals that rip the bottom from any ship save those piloted by expert seamen. Obviously, this domain also links to the Plane of Dreams.

Cultural Level: Stone Age. (Note: The Abber Nomads exist at a stone-age level, but the City of Nod is a renaissance culture. Also, the Clinic for the Mentally Distressed was originally located in Nova Vaasa, a medieval domain with chivalric influences.)

The Folk: Until recently, only the Abber Nomads lived in this domain. Never owning any more than they can carry, the Abber Nomads are occasionally mistaken for druids due to their simplistic lifestyles. They do not use metal weapons or build structures of any kind. These hunters arm themselves primarily with spears and bows. Their culture is based on self-sacrifice and communal unity.

These nomads have developed the mental fortitude needed to deal with the constant changes of the land in which they dwell, something which scholars brave enough to study them attribute to their simple way of life. The Abbers themselves say that they survive because they understand reality as it truly is: Anything that cannot be perceived, does not exist.

Most Abbers have no faith in the permanency of anything, including other beings, but a small percentage reject this philosophy. This minority strives to understand what governs the Nightmare Lands. Other Abbers view this as insanity and cast these individuals out. However, all Abbers believe that insanity can grant insight, so the outcasts become, in effect, tribal shamans. These Abber shamans can cast up to 3rd-level spells and have a variety of other mysterious powers.

Recently the staff and inmates of the Clinic for the Mentally Distressed were drawn into the land by the evil deeds of Dr. Harold Tasker, who had fallen under the sway of an evil being known as the Nightmare Man. The clinic's chief physician, Dr. Gregorian Illhousen, attempted to defeat the Nightmare Court, but he was betrayed by Tasker. Although Tasker has been confined to one of the cells, Illhousen and the eighteen other staff members - not to mention the sixty-two patients - have not yet been able to escape. Worse, they are slowly being driven insane by the nightmares of this domain. Thus, the clinic is gradually becoming a very dangerous place.

Native Player Characters: Natives player characters from the Nightmare Lands must be Abber nomads. Due to the primitive culture of the Abbers, players may choose to be only fighters or rangers. Racial choices are limited to humans and half-elves. Abber nomads never dream, they are immune to spells that affect dreams, and they have a 5% resistance to all mind-affecting spells.

Personalities of Note: Any character from anywhere may be encountered in the Nightmare Lands, having either been drawn here through his own dreams or as the product of someone else's nightmare.

Additionally, an Abber shaman, Walks Alone, dwells on the edge of the Ring of Dreams. He is a storehouse of knowledge of the Nightmare Lands and knows how to create magical items that will allow characters to enter and exit the dreamscapes.

Finally, Dr. Gregorian Illhousen and Nurse Caroline Dinwiddy of the Clinic for the Mentally Distressed roam the land in an attempt to escape. Protected by a magical item known as a dreamcatcher, they have both managed to stave off insanity. These two were forced to flee the clinic when other staff members began to get violent. They have fallen in love (despite the fact that Illhousen is twice her age), and she is currently pregnant. Both hope to escape so that their baby will not be born in a land of madness.

The Law: The Nightmare Court rules this place. Their exact numbers are unknown, but the more prominent ones include the Nightmare Man (a skeletal, robed figure whose body consists of thousands of crawling spiders), the Ghost Dancer (a tragic, undead ballerina whose white gown sports ominous, bloody handprints), Morpheus (an imp with a wicked sense of humor), Hypnos (sleep personified), Mullonga (a malicious, aboriginal witch), and the Rainbow Serpent (an intelligent, evil snake).

Each member of the court seems to favor a certain type of nightmare, endeavoring to pollute the nightly sleep of mortals with these dreams. The Nightmare Lands have no laws, save the chaotic logic of a dreamscape.

Encounters: Each encounter in the Nightmare Lands is a unique experience. Characters have a 25% chance for an encounter once during the day and once again each night.

Further Reading: This domain and its lords are fully detailed in *The Nightmare Lands* campaign expansion. Rules for running adventures in dreamscapes are included in that boxed set.

Dungeon Masters who want to use the Nightmare Lands without referring to the boxed set should focus encounters around the dream visions the Nightmare Court creates, rather than plan to have the heroes fight these strange beings directly.

Scaena

Scaena is a theater where unfortunate visitors become unwilling players in the twisted dramas penned by master playwright Lemot Sediam Juste. The theater lures the unwary to their doom, trapping them in a madman's dream of reality and illusion. This Floating domain usually stays within the Misty Border until Juste has finished a work and needs actors and an audience. Then, Scaena may materialize in another of Ravenloft's domains - or even on the Prime Material Plane. As long as a domain lord is not concentrating on keeping his borders closed, Scaena can move freely through the various domains. Domain lords generally remain totally unaware of its presence.

The Land: The term "land" is a slight misnomer, since Scaena is actually just a single building. The theater manifests itself in different lands, often usurping the place of another theater while it exists in that land. The exterior of the building takes on a variety of appearances, but generally its external architecture matches the cultural level and social expectations of the domain it is inhabiting.

The interior of the theater always includes a finely appointed lobby with adjoining rooms for patrons to freshen themselves before performances. The theater itself seats an audience of approximately five hundred. While the theater is not opulent, neither is it colorless and drab; its gold-stitched curtains and padded seats dispel any aura of dinginess. However, something in the air still lends an ambiance of decay and rot. To the right of the stage sits a small, curtained nook with an ink-spattered writing desk littered with parchment, broken quills, and ink pots. Behind the stage lies a small kitchen with doors leading to the bedroom and bath area.

As soon as someone sets foot on the stage, a whole new world emerges - a world devised by the demilord of this domain, Lemot Sediam Juste, master thespian, playwright, and madman. Anyone who ventures onto the stage must make a successful saving throw vs. spell with a -6 penalty or experience a complete disorientation of mind and body. When the nausea subsides, he finds himself trapped in a play of Juste's devising. His many plays are quite diverse, but since Juste strives to perfect his tragedy and horror pieces, his victims will surely not enjoy their stay in Scaena.

None of the scenes Juste creates are real, though every sense takes part in the deception. Whenever the scene changes, characters trapped within the play may attempt another saving throw at a -4 penalty to see through the facade woven by the storyteller. In this case, the disbeliever can see that the entire land is merely a stage, with the maniac Juste frantically scribbling new scenes. Still, the unbeliever can again be fooled if he does not concentrate on maintaining disbelief. Divination spells and devices such as a *gem of seeing* have no effect on the mirages of Scaena.

Although Juste seems unable to control the destination of Scaena, he can sometimes determine when it moves. By keeping it stationary, he may allow the patrons to return to their own land when the play ends. More likely however, the sadistic Juste will kill them or abandon them in some strange domain.

Cultural Level: Renaissance.

The Folk: The only person native to Scaena is Lemot Sediam Juste. Most of those who enter Scaena end up on stage and are thus receptive to the illusions woven by Juste. The others are patrons of the theater from whatever land the domain is visiting. Anyone the players might encounter here will be a patron, a bit character created by Juste, a leading (though unwilling) actor, or an adventurer who wandered into Scaena unaware of the doom lying ahead.

Those who enter Juste's theater condemn themselves to a fate that few would envy. If they touch the stage, they usually become the doomed heroes of a tragic piece. Most other visitors are merely part of the audience. Juste may create other folk

to interact with visitors, but they possess no reality beyond that of his imagination.

The Law: The only law in Scaena is Juste's; whatever he decrees becomes reality on stage. His plays have thus become extremely convincing, both to the actors and to the audience. No longer do the theater patrons have to work to suspend their disbelief, for the scenes appear totally real unless a conscious effort is made to disbelieve. However, patrons also lose all sense of self for the duration of the play, attending only to the production.

Attending plays in Scaena is a dangerous diversion. Juste expects to receive nothing less than total critical acclaim with each production. If any members of the audience act displeased with the show, they risk Juste's wrath. While Juste is physically weak, his mind and imagination are extraordinarily keen. Juste derives great pleasure from slowly driving his victims insane.

Time is subjective in Scaena. Since the patrons become bored watching people sleep in the play, Juste often accelerates the personal flow of time for those on the stage. Thus, while his actors may feel as though the whole night has passed, perhaps only five minutes have elapsed. For this reason, natural healing is mostly ineffective in Scaena (except for damage caused by illusory creatures). Injured characters must rely on magic to regain their health.

Encounters: All creatures in Scaena are either creations of Juste, entertainment seekers who just picked the wrong theater to visit, or wanderers from the Misty Border. Encounters range from frightened 0-level humans to creatures so twisted that only a diseased mind could spawn them. As little as five minutes of sleep can heal the damage inflicted by these illusionary creatures, and a character killed by this damage must roll a successful saving throw vs. death magic to merely fall unconscious. However, if the saving throws fail, the victim dies.

Further Reading: This domain and its demented demilord are detailed in *Islands of Terror*.

Demilord of Scaena

Lemot Sediam Juste
3rd-Level Human Illusionist, Chaotic Evil



Armor Class	9	Str	7
Movement	12	Dex	15
Level/ Hit Dice	3	Con	8
Hit Points	8	Int	20
THAC0	20	Wis	15
No. of Attacks	1	Cha	17
Damage/ Attack	1d8 (long sword)		
Special Attacks	Illusions		
Special Defences	Illusions		
Magic Resistance	10%		

Lemot Sediam Juste is approximately six and a half feet tall with an emaciated, nearly skeletal, frame. His skin bears an unhealthy, sickly pallor. His deep black eyes mesmerize those who approach too closely. Usually, ink spatters his clothing, for his obsessive writing does not allow time for personal hygiene. While acting, he usually hides his long, thin, greasy, black hair under a wig or hat.

While his personal appearance is somewhat unpleasant, he still radiates a certain degree of magnetism. His personality, though moderately grating, is attractive to those who speak to him for even a short while. His frantic devotion and gaunt appearance actually add to his attractiveness as an actor, and he can be enormously pleasing to have around. Of course, his manner these days is often brusque and rude, for he does not really regard anybody in Scaena as real.

Background: As one of the leading actors and playwrights of his time, Lemot Sediam Juste continually sought to improve his art. He would go to any extreme for the sake of the theater. The stage pulsed firmly through his veins, and he pursued his obsession with little thought for anything else, stepping on those who obstructed his climb to glory.

Although he had achieved much fame as a dramatist and comedic actor, Juste was not satisfied. He wanted praise for being the consummate theater man, the actor who knew no bounds. Unfortunately, he could not capture the subtle nuances so essential for a tragedy's success. For a time, he threw himself wholeheartedly into the effort, but the finer details continued to elude him. His attempts at acting out tragic roles resulted only in melodrama or, even worse, unintentional comedy.

His directing efforts fared no better. His acting troupe could not perform his works without playing up the comic trends of each piece. Juste began cracking under the strain of seeing actors sabotage his efforts.

Finally, Juste could stand no more. His players had pushed him beyond all reason. He devised a play in which all the characters died in exquisitely painful ways. He did not try to turn it into a tragedy, as he was interested only in ridding himself of the bothersome actors. Yet, as his troupe rehearsed the piece, they constantly remarked on the quality of the script as a tragedy. Juste refused to be lured from his bloody revenge by what he perceived as empty flattery and allowed his grim scheme to continue.

Opening night for Juste's long-awaited new play finally arrived. Instead of engaging various theater patrons in conversation previous to the play's beginning, as was customary, Juste instead paid a visit to the prop room. He replaced the collapsible

dagger with a genuine steel one and exchanged the false poison for a toxic substance. He worked through the entire room in this fashion, substituting all the nonlethal props with props that would prove fatal in the context of the play. His actors would soon perform their most convincing "death scenes" ever. Since none of the characters' bodies were to be removed from the stage until the play was over, Juste was sure that he could still escape from the playhouse after savoring his revenge.

On stage, a tale of intrigue, lust, and betrayal unfolded before the wide-eyed audience. The assembly gasped when the mayor's son went down under the knives of assassins, blood streaming across the stage. The poisoning scene was particularly effective, the face of the baron's mistress turning convincingly black as she choked on her tongue, and the torture scene went off without a hitch. Yet, when the play finally ended and Juste stood to take the applause, they booed him. The audience was expecting more from a master playwright than just a series of gory scenes.

Juste, more than a little crazed with anger by this time, fled from the theater. Outside, he barred the doors and set the building on fire. He crouched in a nearby alley and listened with great delight as the screams of the burning patrons escaped over the roar of the inferno. As the constabulary gathered to quell the blaze and search for witnesses, Juste realized he could no longer stay hidden. He fled silently from the alley into the Mists that had arisen.

He ran through the Mists and ducked into a theater building owned by a friend of his. A performance was underway, so he quietly took a seat in the back and soon fell asleep. He awoke to find the play had ended and the theater had emptied while he slept. He was the only person left in the theater, though all the gas lamps were still burning. Even stranger, the theater no longer had dressing rooms, costume closets, scenery, or prop shops.

Juste also found that he could not venture beyond the front doors of the theater, which were blocked by swirling gray Mists. Nothing physical prevented him from leaving, but when he even considered setting a foot in the fog, his mind filled with fears forgotten since childhood, nearly overwhelming him with their strength.

Out of sheer boredom and frustration. Juste again began to write a play. After an hour or so of uninterrupted writing, he cast his gaze about. To his surprise, the environment was totally different. He found himself in a dim forest, the over- cast sky hanging low overhead. The stark blackness of the obsidian cliffs served to dim the emerald green of the forest. Off in the distance, the faint howling of wolves became evi- dent as the creatures seemed to move closer. The dark clouds opened at last, spilling a rain of poisonous blood over the verdant woods. When Juste screamed and ran, he found himself again standing on the stage of the theater. The scene flats around him closely resembled the forest from which he had just escaped. Juste did not recall this scene being on stage previously. Indeed, it closely resembled the scene he had recently described in his manuscript.

Excitedly, Juste returned to his writing desk and began a new scene. To his delight, the new props sprang into being around him, though he no longer saw it as reality. Taking a healthy supply of paper, a pen, and an inkwell. Juste began wandering though the fortress of his imagination, creating and destroying play-worlds with the stroke of a quill.

Current Sketch: Juste is the ultimate showman. For precisely this reason, he becomes enraged when his actors - or unreceptive audience members - cause him to destroy a production. If a production is destroyed. Juste will not let the audience leave the building alive. To punish them, he simply bars the doors and torches the place. Although he, like the patrons, feels the tremendous agony of blistering heat, he does not die from the flaming timbers of Scaena.

If a production is a success, he will probably allow the audience to leave the building alive, though perhaps not necessarily into the same land from which they entered the theater. More likely, they arrive in some unknown domain in the Demiplane.

Juste has a particular need for others to experience the theater so that he may share in the experience vicariously. His greatest despair is that he cannot truly believe in his plays. Ever since he first hurled himself from the bloody forest, he sees only his theater, the props, and the captured actors. To him, even the minor characters he creates appear as no more than

wooden cut-outs. Compared to his former experience with the stage, this is a rather painful situation.

Lemot Juste has come to regard all who are drawn into his plays as constructs of his imagination. Since they appear when he needs them, he assumes that they are his creations, figments invested with the personality necessary to fulfill the roles. The land has granted Juste the ability to know virtually everything about the history and personality of everyone who touches his stage - including player characters. Therefore, he can easily support his claims to have created everyone and everything in Scaena. Juste can deftly rattle off events in a character's life - events which none other would know. Such tactics have caused many weaker souls to step away from the tenuous footbridge of rationality into the abyss of insanity, turning them into mindless puppets.

When Juste finishes with his "major characters", he occasionally abandons them in the Mists, leaving them to wander until they find a haven. More often, he drops the bodies in a carefully chosen location to frighten the middle-class citizens, whom he refers to as "the herd". Even though he despises and mocks them, he is all too eager to take their money. Exactly what he needs it for is unknown, but he continues to collect it.

Occasionally Juste himself takes part in the spectacle unfolding on the stage. He usually does this only when the scene is unlikely to change in the next hour or so, such as a banquet hall, a chamber in a castle, or something of the sort. When he does so, he may appear as any sort of humanoid between five and seven feet tall, male or female, young or old. When he does choose to appear. Juste always carries the sheaf of papers on which he has written the various scenes.

Closing the Borders: Juste can construct a *wall of fear* around his domain. Any character who ventures into the Mists at this point begins to feel a slight unease. The fear and terror mount the farther into the Mists he goes, building into a fevered pitch as his worst nightmares rise from the Mists to challenge him, and his heart begins to skip rapidly and irregularly. If the character continues moving away from Scaena, he must make successful saving throw vs. death magic or die of pure terror, beginning one hundred feet from the building. Every ten feet beyond that point, he must make another successful saving throw with an cumulative -1 penalty. (For example, at one hundred thirty feet, he saves with a -3 penalty.) This experience inevitably kills any victims foolish enough to continue. If the character tries to return to the building, he finds it only five feet away, as if it had been awaiting his return.

Combat: Juste may well be one of the most dangerous characters that many heroes ever encounter, for his ability to stretch the limits of sanity knows no equal. His powers over Scaena also give him an edge far beyond his apparent abilities.

Opponents can injure Juste only by penetrating the myriad illusions which surround him. While he is not an experienced spell caster, he knows enough about the ways of illusion and misdirection to avoid most harm that comes his way. More than one layer of mirage surrounds Juste, so it is difficult to catch him.

Even if someone manages to reach him, Juste can move through the very substance of his theater. If he has the initiative, he can meld with the wood of the theater to reappear someplace else. He is most likely to materialize on the stage, where he can influence his attackers more directly or turn them against each other.

As a last resort, he can cause the building to burn around him. To save himself, he will willingly endure tremendous suffering. If Juste is ever slain, his body melts into the wood of the theater, and he arises again in one day. While regenerating. Juste is at his most vulnerable. If anyone burns the theater during this time, he is permanently slain.

When the theater burns, the doors automatically close and bar themselves. It takes a combined Strength of 30 to open these doors, and only two characters can get at them at a time. Otherwise, the heroes probably will suffer the same blazing death so many others have met in Scaena.

Juste titles each scene he has written and can call up that scene by speaking its name aloud. He can maintain only three scenes on the stage at once, so if any party splits in more than three ways, the illusion is shattered unless Juste is willing to

sacrifice some credibility. Since Juste rarely does so, chances are that he will sacrifice the whole production instead. This never fails to exasperate Juste, so he will exact his revenge in a fitting manner.

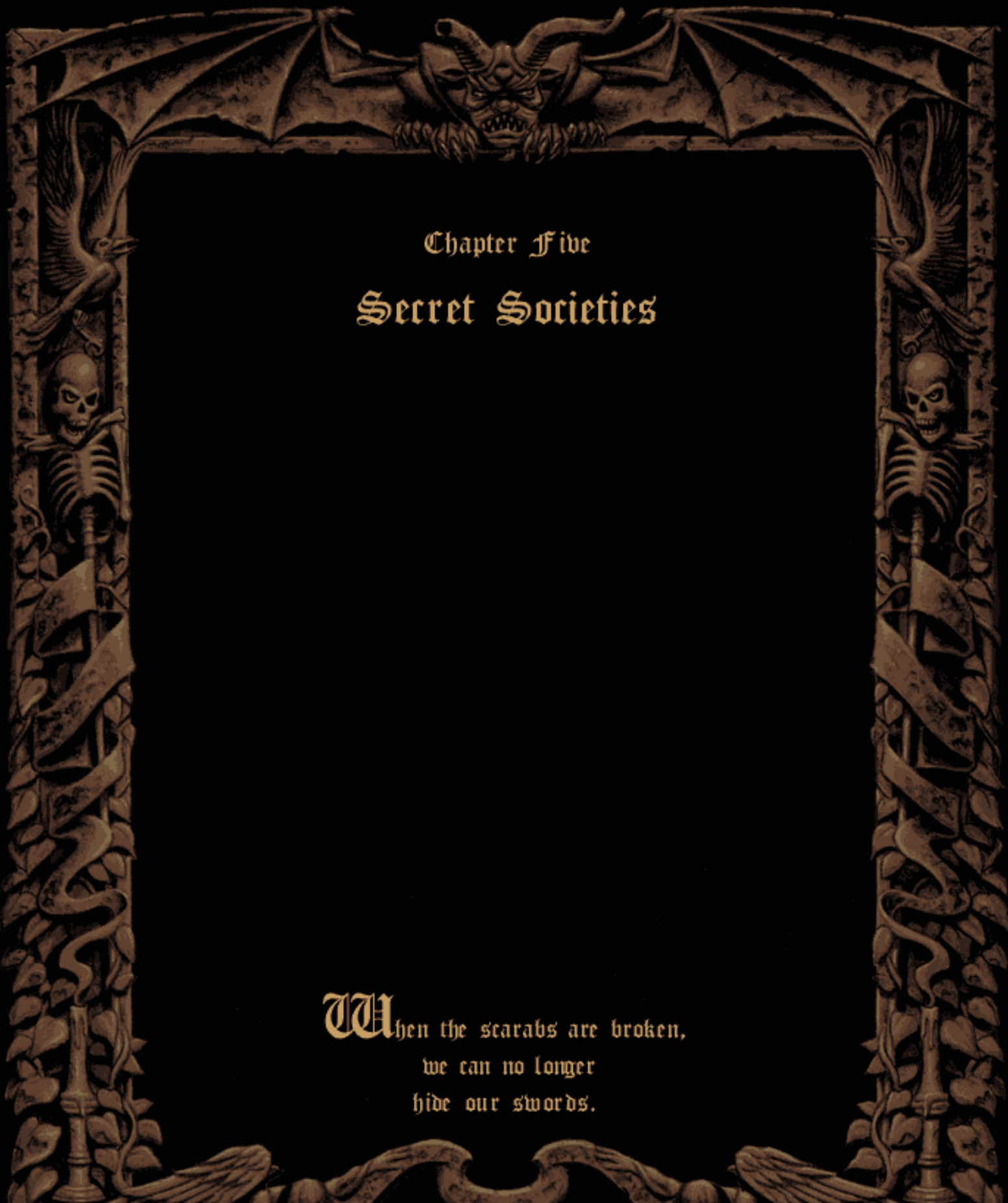
His favorite ploy is to dissolve the scenery around the heroes, leaving only a stage and the surrounding theater. The props and backdrops will all be in place, showing the participants that they were in a play. It is essential to his plan that the party accepts this as the truth, for if they question it, they might very well destroy the whole illusion. The theater the characters see is not the real theater. While it resembles the real thing in nearly every particular, it too is a sham. Just when the players have become comfortable with that reality, something horrible will happen to the theater. If the heroes disbelieve, Juste creates the illusion of another theater as fast as he can, creating an endless cycle, each one returning the actors to another stage and pulling them deeper into his madness.

After what may seem like days of this. Juste will contact the heroes through an image of himself, explaining their non-reality. He argues that since he can change their environments by simply willing it, control others around them, and create entire worlds, they too are obviously just his creations. Granted, they may be free willed, but that is a side effect of the creation of strong characters. If they remain unconvinced, he will recite to them their recent history, demonstrating knowledge he could not possibly possess otherwise.

Juste is a persuasive man, especially so because of his charismatic personality. If the heroes fail to make successful saving throws vs. spell during this argument, they find themselves under his influence (as per a *charm* spell).

After a full week, each victim may attempt another saving throw. Any character that fails loses 1 point of Intelligence per day and begins exhibiting one facet of his personality more strongly than any other - until that facet totally dominates the character. A victim may attempt another saving throw vs. spell each day to break free, with a penalty proportionate to his Intelligence loss. Thus, someone who has lost 2 points of Intelligence would save with a -2 penalty, while someone who has lost 5 points would save with a -5 penalty. If the victim breaks the spell, he recovers Intelligence at the rate of one point per week. Their personalities also return with their Intelligence.

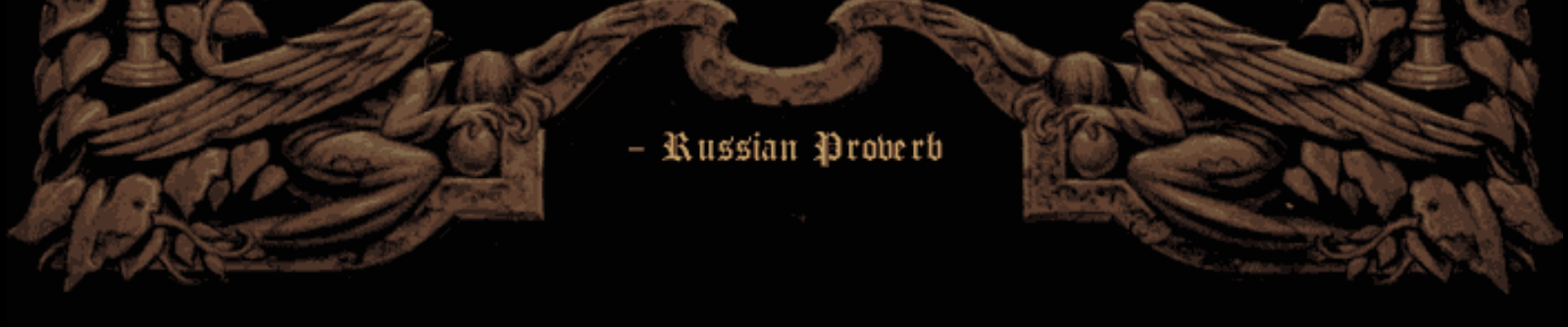
If a victim reaches 0 Intelligence, he becomes a minor character, and his existence is entirely dependent on Juste's will. If Juste wills the character to disappear, that character's existence is completely obliterated until Juste wills him to return. Even then, the character will be only a pale shadow of what he used to be. Unless the victim's compatriots can somehow rescue him, he is doomed to an eternity of serving as a bit player in Juste's masterpieces. These victims may be rescued in various ways, including removing them from the theater, destroying the theater, or killing Juste.



Chapter Five

Secret Societies

When the scarabs are broken,
we can no longer
hide our swords.


– Russian Proverb

An ancient Vistani verse claims that the Mists of Ravenloft hide many things. A rough translation of this passage might read:

> *The Mists hide truths and lies, heroes and villains, triumphs and tragedies. Most of all, the Mists hide the secrets of a thousand tortured souls*

For centuries, the most observant men and women of the Demiplane have known that there was more to the world around them than met the eye. Certain citizens of the Barovian mountains have long suspected that Strahd von Zarovich is not the normal man he pretends to be. Some have similar suspicions about the domain lords of Sithicus, Kartakass, and G'Henna. However, when it became clear that it was as dangerous to be astute as to be unobservant, the wisest of these citizens decided to close ranks and keep their secrets to themselves.

No one knows exactly how many secret societies are shrouded by the Mists of Ravenloft. This chapter presents nine of these covert groups.

Game Use

Secret Societies can fulfill many roles in a RAVENLOFT campaign. In most cases, the way in which a secret society fits into a given campaign depends upon the actions and alignments of the player characters. If the organization shares alignments or goals with the player characters, then it can serve as a patron. Indeed, it might even be possible for the heroes to join the order and fully embrace its ultimate plans. A fine example of such groups might be the Circle or the Keepers of the Black Feather. By their very nature, all members of the anchorite class belong to the Church of Ezra, described later in this chapter.

A member of an evil secret society (or one that merely seeks to accomplish things the heroes find objectionable) can make a fine villain for an adventure. In such scenarios, it might even be possible for the heroes to confront their enemies without ever learning the society's true nature or objectives.

Lastly, a secret society can be used as a distraction or red herring. In the course of the adventure, the characters might come across members of a mysterious order who get in their way but are not the actual focus of the adventure. This type of encounter can easily foreshadow future plot twists.

Ultimate Goals

In almost every case, a single objective drives the members of a secret society. This may be simple, like the death of a given ruler, or more esoteric, like an understanding of the true nature of life and death. In most cases, however, the members of a secret society know (and sometimes fanatically embrace) this goal.

Not all secret societies have clearly defined goals, however. Rather, some secret societies have goals so obscure or fantastic that none can guess or even understand them. Thus, some of these societies apparently exist merely to exist.

Cells

Most of the societies described on the following pages guard their secrets carefully. They do not reveal their existence, memberships, or goals to the outside world. In fact, most secret societies are organized in small groups called cells. Each cell is composed of a handful of members who know each other, but no one beyond their own group. Only the leader of a given cell knows how to contact members of another cell.

Good Secret Societies

Even in a land as dark and devoid of hope as the Demiplane of Dread, some seek to do what is just and good.

The Keepers of the Black Feather

A Lawful Good Secret Society

Let a man so act by day that he may lie happily on his mat by night.
- Japanese Proverb

The Keepers of the Black Feather exist only within the borders of Barovia, and it has dedicated itself to the destruction of none other than Strahd von Zarovich. Working slowly and methodically, they hope against hope for a triumph against this vampire darklord, which may have repercussions far beyond their understanding.

Membership

The common members of this group are normal men and women of lawful good alignment who share a selfless dedication to the liberation of Barovia and the destruction of its vampire lord.

The Keepers are organized into cells called talons, each commanded by a Talon Chief. Unbeknownst to most members of this society, these Talon Chiefs are actually infected wereravens. Above these persons preside the five Holders of the Feather. Like the talon chiefs, these members are wereravens. They, however, are true examples of the species, not infected humans.

At the head of this order, although only the five Holders know his identity, is Pyoor Twohundredsummers, a ravenkin (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I&II). Pyoor's determination allows the Keepers of the Black Feather to survive under the very eye of the darklord they wish to destroy.

Recognition

Members of this order mark themselves in three ways. First, each member wears a raven feather somewhere on his body. When a member wishes to identify himself to another, he strikes up a conversation and drops the word "nest" into a casual question. To complete this verbal code, the response must include the word "feather". Lastly, a member must identify himself by speaking his name in the language of ravens.

Activities

The focus of the Keepers is, of course, the destruction of Strahd von Zarovich and the liberation of Barovia. Of course, the members realize that this is not an easily accomplished feat. Thus, they often act as a secret force, attempting to help those who have been harmed by the actions of the vampire count. When the chance to strike at Strahd or his minions directly presents itself, they generally employ mercenaries or adventurers to do so. Of all the secret societies listed in this chapter, the Keepers are perhaps the most subtle in their schemes and actions. They know how sharp the eye of Strahd is, and they have no wish to attract its caustic gaze.

Headquarters

The actions of the Keepers of the Black Feather are directed from the village of Barovia, in a secret location known as The Nest. There, in a secret basement beneath an inn known as the Blood o' the Vine, Pyoor and his wereraven lieutenants weigh all aspects of Strahd's actions.

The Green Hand

A Neutral Good Secret Society

We should weep for men at their birth, and not at their death.
- French Proverb

Inhabitants of the desert domain of Har'Akir view the god Osiris as the protector of graves and enemy of the undead. The Green Hand (named for the fact that Osiris is believed to be green-skinned) dedicates itself to the sanctity of the grave and the destruction of undead or those who defile the resting places of the dead.

Membership

In order to become an agent of the Green Hand, a character must have a Wisdom of 16 or better and be of neutral good alignment. He must have never participated in the robbing of a grave or looting of a dead body.

In addition, a member must allocate proficiency slots to master the hieroglyphic language of Har'akir (treated as an ancient language) and the religion proficiency. It is important to note that this language is not the modern script used in that desert realm, but its ancient ancestor.

Recognition

The traditional symbols of Osiris are the shepherd's crook and an ornate flail. Thus, each member of the Green Hand must wield a footman's flail in combat. The flail must bear an inscription in the ancient language of Osiris, and a member identifies himself to another by reading aloud the glyphs on the other's flail. These will always be a personalized oath dedicating the weapon to the battle against undead and the defilers of the grave.

Activities

The agents of the Green Hand are generally active only in the Amber Wastes. When a grave robber, or other enemy of the order, travels beyond the borders of those domains, however, members of the secret society have been known to pursue their quarry across the Demiplane of Dread. Indeed, legends claim that a few members, so determined to avenge wrongs committed against the order, actually followed victims beyond the Misty Border itself.

While many of the members of the Green Hand are priests of Osiris, this is not a requirement. It is important to note, however, that even those members who are not true priests are called upon to act as lay-clergy. Thus, they often preside over funeral services and other religious ceremonies that honor or involve the dead.

Headquarters

The High Priest of Har'Akir generally dictates the actions of the Green Hand. Leadership of this order is a traditional responsibility of that office, although it is often delegated to an underling.

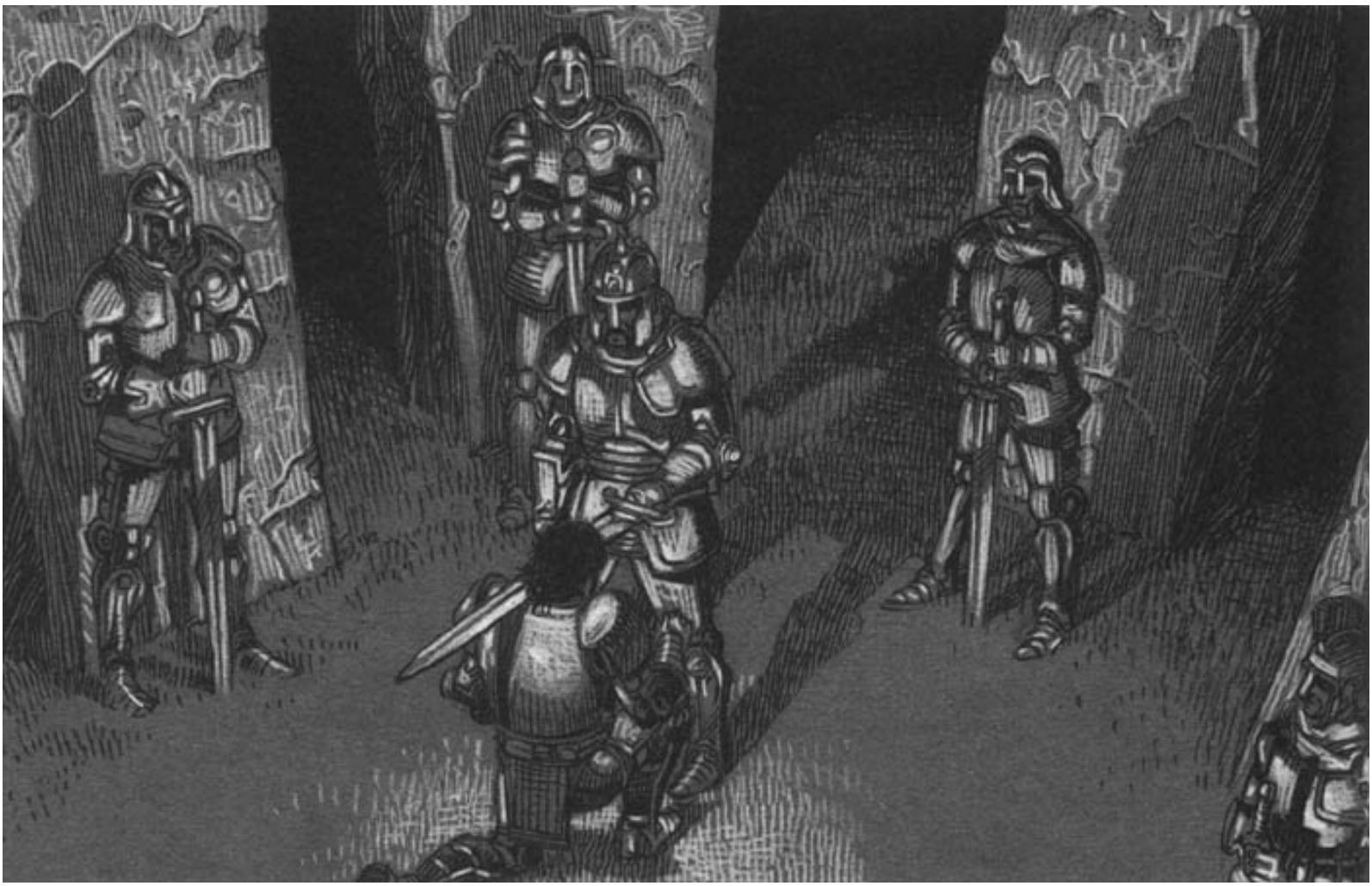
Some claim that many of the most impressive tombs in Har'akir have secret chambers where members of the Green Hand meet, but that may not be true.

The Circle

A Chaotic Good Secret Society

Though the sword of justice is sharp, it will not slay the innocent.
- Chinese Proverb

Few families have suffered as much at the hands of the dark powers as that of the Shadowborn clan. For centuries, this proud and noble line produced some of the most pious heroes and heroines imaginable. Despite the tragic history of this family, they remain dedicated to the service of truth and justice. To that end, young Alexi Shadowborn founded an order of knighthood known as the Circle. Members of the Circle became known as Knights of the Shadows. Since its inception some twelve decades ago, the Circle has been one of the few bright spots in the Demiplane of Dread.



Membership

All members of the Circle belong to the avenger class and are of chaotic good alignment. In addition to the normal requirements for avengers, members must also have Wisdom and Charisma scores of 15 or greater. The traditional weapon of this order is the long sword, and all members must specialize in its use.

Recognition

A Knight of the Shadows is easily recognized by those familiar with the organization and others of their order. Even in the most perilous of situations, a member of this society will take no steps to disguise himself or otherwise hide his membership in the Circle. Because of this, they are the most famous of the secret societies.

Knights of the Shadows always wear plate-mail armor adorned with the eclipsed sun that stands as the signet of the group. This icon also serves as a clasp to secure the traditional black and yellow cape that all members wear.

Activities

The Circle seeks to bring the light of truth and justice into a world seemingly devoid of such virtues. They do so by opposing the evil of the domain lords wherever they can. Such activities would be almost suicidal if members of this order did not take such great care to protect themselves.

While these Knights do not conceal their identities, they rely heavily on safehouses and subtle strategies to remain one step ahead of the lords who would see them exterminated. Because directly facing and defeating a domain lord is almost impossible, they often attempt to cripple them by destroy ing. their chief lieutenants.

Headquarters

The Circle meets once a year at a circle of standing stones located in a hidden grove somewhere in the domain of Avonleigh in the Shadowborn Cluster. Failure by a Knight of the Shadows to make this pilgrimage results in dismissal from the order. Apart from this, the Circle has no recognized headquarters.

Neutral Secret Societies

Those who seek an ultimate balance of forces usually face an uphill battle in this land of darkness.

The Church of Ezra

A Lawful Neutral Secret Society

They that are in hell think there is no heaven.
- English Proverb

The Church of Ezra is not a true secret society, for it takes no steps to conceal its existence. It is included in this chapter, however, because of the influence it has over its members and the importance it plays to characters of the anchorite class.

The practitioners of this faith worship a deity known only as Ezra, whom they depict as a tall, slender woman in flowing, white robes. Her raven hair and eyes contrast sharply with her pale skin. Revered as both protector and healer, she is usually depicted holding an alabaster kite shield and a slender sword of similar construction. The shield is often adorned with a sprig of wolfsbane in recognition of her role as a healer.

Membership

Almost anyone can become a member of the Church of Ezra. The only requirement is a tithe of ten copper pieces per year and an alignment no more than one step removed from lawful neutral.

Members of the church are expected to protect others from harm, always coming to the aid of individuals in distress despite any personal risk involved. Similarly, they must always be ready to give aid and comfort to the sick or injured. One of the common sayings in the church is "Today I care for you as tomorrow you will care for me".

Recognition

Although members of the church are not required to identify themselves in any way, many wear holy symbols to show their faith. These are most frequently small tokens in the shape of wolfsbane sprigs or tiny replicas of the sword and shield that Ezra is said to carry. During church services, which are held every five days, members of the church must wear white clothing.

Activities

The Church of Ezra has no fewer than four distinct sects. Each of these has its own objectives and methods, although they all recognize the authority of the central church. These divisions correspond roughly to the alignments of the members: lawful neutral, true neutral, lawful good, and lawful evil.

In addition, the practices of the churches in each domain differ from one another. Thus, a church in Barovia will differ from one in Falkovnia, even though they technically belong to the same sect. Any follower can worship at any church, but outside of their own domain and rite they will find subtle and sometimes disturbing differences in the practices.

Headquarters

All sects of the Church of Ezra recognize the authority of the Great Cathedral (lawful neutral), which is located in Levkarest. Three lesser temples - located in Port-a-Lucine (neutral), Mordentshire (lawful good), and Nevuchar Springs (lawful evil) - exercise authority over the various rites.

The Vistany

A True Neutral Secret Society

An unguarded object remains safe if protected by destiny; stricken by destiny, it perishes though well-guarded.
- Indic Proverb

These Ravenloft gypsies are described in great detail in *Van Richten's Guide to the Vistani*. Still, many mysteries remain unsolved in the wake of that text. For that reason, the Vistani can certainly be considered a secret society.

Membership

An ancient Vistani saying teaches that "only the Vistani are the Vistani". To the Vistani, this illustrates the fact that those who are not of true Vistani blood cannot be trusted. As such, it serves as an excellent example of the membership philosophy of the Vistani. Someone not born to Vistani parents is not a Vistani.

From time to time, an outsider may be welcomed into the ranks of the Vistani. Such a person, however, must have done some great service for these wanderers of the Mists. Dungeon Masters should allow characters to earn this honor only after an epic adventure.

Recognition

The Vistani have no need of symbols, signs, or other marks of recognition. When one of these gypsies looks upon another, he is instantly aware that his gaze rests upon one of his own.

Outsiders who have been accepted into the ranks of the Vistani do not have this ability, though a true Vistani will recognize them for what they are. So few of these people exist, however, that this is seldom a concern.

Activities

"The Vistani do what the Vistani do". This old proverb from the domain of Barovia is as fitting a description of these people as one is ever likely to need.

Many believe that the Vistani have some secret goal that they slowly strive toward; others say that they have a secret so terrible that they work always to keep it hidden. If either of these is true, or if some other secret explains their mysterious behavior, no outsider can say. Perhaps the future will reveal the answer.

Headquarters

Vistani tribes travel from place to place in great wagons, called vardos. These caravans serve as the only headquarters they have. This is not to say that the various tribes might not have caches of supplies, weapons, or the like scattered about Ravenloft, only that the Vistani are a nomadic people.

Of course, some say that the Vistani come from a secret land hidden away in the Mists. This place is most often called oculhogar. Most sages dismiss these claims as wishful thinking, however.

The Carnival

A Chaotic Neutral Secret Society

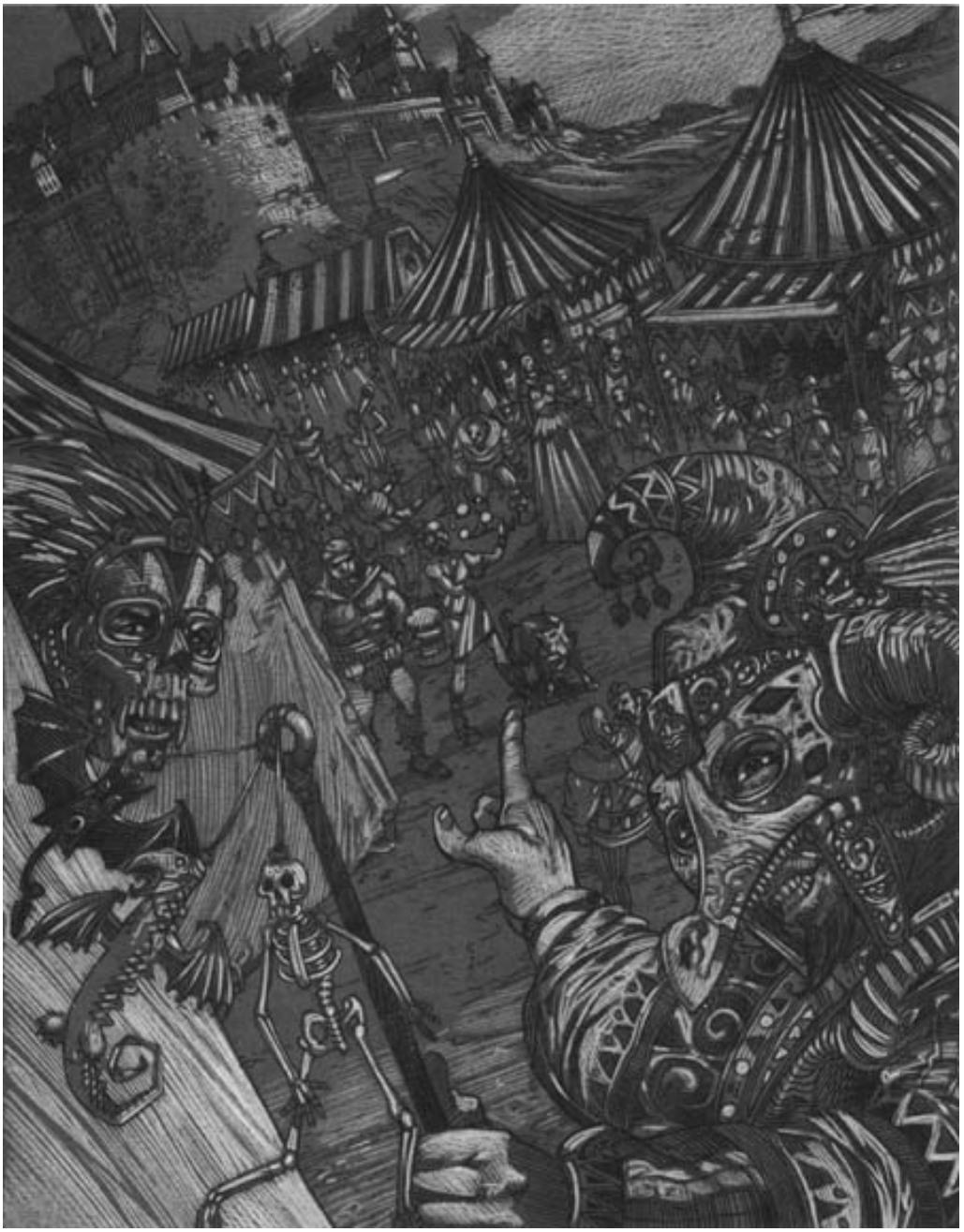
Who makes frequent inquiries about the road does not go astray.
- Yugoslavian Proverb

Carnival is a traveling collection of entertainers, merchants, and exhibitors - assembled with an eye toward the macabre and supernatural. Visitors to this mysterious festival find tests of skill, games of chance, freak shows, dancers, musicians, and countless other ways to pass their time and spend their money.

The master of this carnival is an unusual and beautiful woman named Isolde. Isolde and her motley collection of wanderers usually appear outside of a town suddenly, perform for a night or two (though they have been known to stay up to a week), and then disappear just as mysteriously. Strangely enough, residents almost always know in advance that Carnival will be arriving soon.

Membership

Isolde recruits performers and employees for Carnival from all across Ravenloft. The company of outcasts and freaks she has assembled see her as their savior, for she has given them a life better than any they had before. In order to become one of Isolde's performers, a character must have some unusual characteristic or exceptional ability. This might be a deformity, talent, or even a collection oddities that can be displayed.



Recognition

The roster of Isolde's employees is not large; at no time does she carry more than sixty people in her employ. Since they are called to work together frequently, all of her employees know each other. Because of this, no special signs of recognition are needed. However, many of her performers do have a small tattoo of a rearing horse on the back of their heads.

Activities

On the surface, Carnival appears to be a normal enough traveling show. In actuality, it is far more than that. While no



one seems to know exactly what the carnival and its master are all about, a few things are apparent. The most important and amazing of these is the fact that Isolde seems to have no fear of the domain lords. Indeed, in her travels around the Core, she has harbored enemies of the darklords on more than one occasion. It seems, in fact, that the powers of Ravenloft's deadly masters cannot affect Isolde or those under her protection. How this might be possible is a question none can answer. Isolde appears to have no loyalty to anyone, though she takes great care to protect those in her employ.

No record of Carnival exists prior to the Grand Conjunction, but some claim it has actually been around much longer. Isolde and her performers are very tight-lipped on the matter.

Headquarters

Carnival has no headquarters, unless one considers the wagon in which Isolde resides to be such. This ordinary looking wagon always sits at the center of the carnival. It is from this grand conveyance that she operates all of Carnival's affairs. No one, not even her performers, has ever seen the inside of this wagon.

Evil Secret Societies

In a land so fraught with evil, some individuals are inevitably drawn by its power.

The Kargatane

A Lawful Evil Secret Society

Permission is needless to him who has the power to take without it.
- Spanish Proverb

During the reign of Azalin the lich, the Kargat acted as the state police force of Darkon. Beneath this vile group was the Kargatane, an assembly of mortals who did the bidding of the Kargat - though without always understanding the true nature of their masters.

With the apparent death of Azalin and the transformation of his realm into Necropolis, many believe that the Kargatane has ceased to exist. In truth, the organization is more powerful than ever, although they now act in a covert manner and serve no master. Only their endless desire for immortality and a fascination with blood drives them on.

Membership



No one who seeks to join the Kargatane is accepted into their ranks. Indeed, such petitioners are routinely killed, after being tortured for the names of those who led them to the order. New members come into the Kargatane only when that vile order decides to recruit them.

Although the leader of the Kargatane is a vampiress named Kazandra, all of its lesser members are mortals. Through the rituals of membership, each new recruit shares his blood with Kazandra and, thus, becomes her obedient slave.

Recognition

No formal method of recognition is needed when members of the Kargatane meet with Kazandra to receive their orders. One look into the pale blue eyes of the beautiful vampiress is sufficient to show them that they are in the presence of their master.

Mortal members, on the other hand, are not instantly obvious. To mark themselves as pilgrims on the road to immortality, each carries a small ampoule of what appears to be blood on a slender chain around his neck. In truth, this ampoule holds a deadly poison that can be used to escape capture or interrogation.



Activities

The members of the Kargatane have two objectives. The first is their desire to attain immortality. Because none of the members know that Kazandra is a vampire, they remain unaware that she could easily grant their wish.

The second goal of the group, although they do not realize it, is to obey the will of Kazandra. Whatever scheme the vampiress might have, the Kargatane are pawns in its execution. Her past objectives have usually revolved around attaining control over the people of Martira Bay.

Headquarters

Kazandra directs the actions of the Kargatane from her estate on the coast of the Sea of Sorrows north of Martira Bay. Whenever she needs to meet with one or more members of the order, she sends out a telepathic message, summoning them to the ancestral crypt on that grand estate.

The Fraternity of Shadows

A Neutral Evil Secret Society

Even though you know a thousand things, ask the man who knows one.
- Turkish Proverb

The Fraternity of Shadows is an alliance of wizards and magicians devoted to unravelling the secrets of the Demiplane of Dread. They understand that their land is unique, and they seek to learn why this is the case.

If the Fraternity sought only knowledge, they might be considered harmless. Their ultimate goal, however, is to use the knowledge they acquire to take control of Ravenloft and become the masters of all creatures who dwell there.

Membership

In order to become a member of the Fraternity, a character must be a male wizard of some type and have a neutral evil alignment.

Although all of the Fraternity's leaders are illusionists, most other types of wizards are welcome to join the order. Only those who cannot cast spells from the school of illusion are rejected when they seek membership.

Recognition

Each member of the Fraternity of Shadows wears a silver ring in the shape of two intertwined asps. The mouths of these vipers form the setting into which an onyx stone is placed. The Fraternity presents one of these rings to each member upon acceptance; the ring grants the ability to cast a *darkness, 15' radius* spell once per day. As only members of the Fraternity are able to invoke this power, demonstrating it is a sure sign of the wearer's loyalty and authenticity.

Activities

Most members of this loosely-knit organization carry out their research in their home domains. From time to time, a member will undertake an expedition to learn something that his research has not been able to uncover.

All of the members of the Fraternity work toward a single goal: the attainment of ultimate understanding and power. They recognize that the Mists hide many secrets, and they strive endlessly to increase their knowledge. It is quite possible that the members of the Fraternity know more about the Demiplane of Dread than anyone else in Ravenloft.

Headquarters

While the Fraternity of Shadows maintains no central headquarters, the need for meetings between members is recognized. Whenever a number of members come together, they will do so at a place that represents knowledge and power. Past meetings have taken place (secretly, of course) at the school of magic in Lekar, Falkovnia and at the Great Library in Port-a-Lucine, Dementlieu.

The Unholy Order of the Grave

A Chaotic Evil Secret Society

Day by day death approaches, like the slaughter of a victim being led along step by step.
- Indic Proverb

The Unholy Order of the Grave is perhaps the most unusual of the secret societies described in this chapter. Directed by the hand of Death from the heart of Necropolis, this elite group of undead travels the Demiplane doing their master's bidding. Without a doubt, the most terrible thing about this group is the fact that it is composed wholly of the living dead.

Membership

As mentioned above, membership in the Unholy Order is open only to the ranks of the living dead. Of those creatures, only the self-willed and chaotic evil are considered.

Every member of the Unholy Order must visit the throne of Death in the city of II Aluk and swear loyalty to the grim creature that sits upon it. In exchange for this vow, the undead being is given a fraction of Death's power, enabling him to drain one life-energy level from any living thing he touches. If the creature is already able to do this, his ability increases. Thus, a vampire who joins the Unholy Order is able to drain three life energy levels with his touch.

Recognition

Every member of this vile alliance carries a defiled holy symbol from some lawful good religion. Although this object has no special abilities, it no longer poses a threat to those harmed by good holy symbols. Further proof of membership in the Unholy Order can be found in the fact that each these creatures bears the mark of Death, an hourglass tattoo, over his heart.

Activities

The Unholy Order operates throughout the Demiplane of Dread, carrying out the orders of its grim master. Exactly what plans the master of II Aluk has for the ranks of the living remains unknown, but it is clear that his undead minions are working toward some nefarious objective. Typical assignments for the agents of death include the gathering of life energy, the recovery of magical items, and the recruiting of potential allies.

Headquarters

Death commands the Unholy Order from the dark fortress known as the Grim Fastness, which was rebuilt by his undead minions after being destroyed by the doomsday device. Located at the heart of Il Aluk, this is the sinister structure in which

the lich lord Azalin met his apparent end.

It is said that beneath that keep lie many secrets that Death may not yet have access to. If this is the case, one can rest assured that the agents of the Unholy Order are searching the catacombs beneath the Fastness for such treasures.

Chapter Six

Fear, Horror, and Madness

The effect of Drakula might be the best
likened to that of nightmare.
One cannot touch a nightmare,
weight it, measure it, but no one would
deny the reality of the fear it provokes
in our mind. Like a bad dream Drakula
set off the signal, an alarm, which is at
once false and real, a subtle yet
disquieting reverberation to which our
rational minds are deft, but
which is the more sensitive apparatus of
our subconscious mind brings in
loud and clear


– R.L. Fisher

This chapter examines three of the most important rules used in the RAVENLOFT campaign setting: fear, horror, and madness checks. When combined with the powers checks presented in the next chapter, they form the core of the RAVENLOFT rules. It is possible to run a RAVENLOFT adventure using only these rules and none of the others presented in this book.

Definitions

This chapter outlines various methods for frightening characters who, some might say, are beyond fear. After all, what truly frightens a 10th-level wizard? Admittedly, the answer to that question is "not much". Still, in a RAVENLOFT game, characters will see things that reek of the supernatural and macabre, and on thankfully rare occasions, encounter things the human mind was simply not designed to comprehend.

What is Fear?

Fear is the least of the mental conditions discussed in this book. A character can become frightened when he sees a truly powerful monster, learns of a terrible evil, or finds himself alone in a dangerous place.

Fear comes to everyone, adventurer or commoner, at one time or another. If the heroes encounter something that is dangerous but has no great supernatural overtones to it, the Dungeon Master should assume that it merely inspires fear.

What is Horror?

Horror is a somewhat more intense feeling than fear. In order to create horror, the situation must cause a character to reject what his senses tell him. He must be confronted with circumstances that confound logic and common sense. In some cases, it might be terribly gruesome; in others, it could just be something that the hero believes impossible.

Because AD&D is a game in which magic and the supernatural are commonplace, it cannot be assumed that any magical encounter (even a sinister one) would necessarily engender horror. Dungeon Masters who keep in mind the following example, however, should be able to separate fear and horror fairly quickly: If a hero watches as someone he does not know transforms into a werewolf, he should probably make a fear check; if he watches his wife do the same thing, it is time for a horror check.

What is Madness?

Beyond fear and horror lies the realm of madness. Unlike those lesser states, madness is not a passing phase. A character experiences madness when his mind has been exposed to things beyond his ability to accept or even understand. While a resourceful character can cope with fear and come to terms with horror, he will find madness a most debilitating state. Luckily, few and far between are those who feel the debilitating touch of madness.

The term madness, as used in this text, is not meant to cover all forms of mental illness. Only conditions brought about by trauma, shock, or abuse fall into this category. Further, the descriptions given here are not meant to convey overly factual information about mental conditions. While an effort has been made to accurately reflect the conditions described, great liberties have been taken to promote their inclusion in the game.

Notes on Fear and Horror

As even a casual examination of the mechanics presented in this chapter will reveal, the effects of even a failed fear check can be truly terrible. Some might even say that they seem more severe than the circumstances justify. This is intentional.

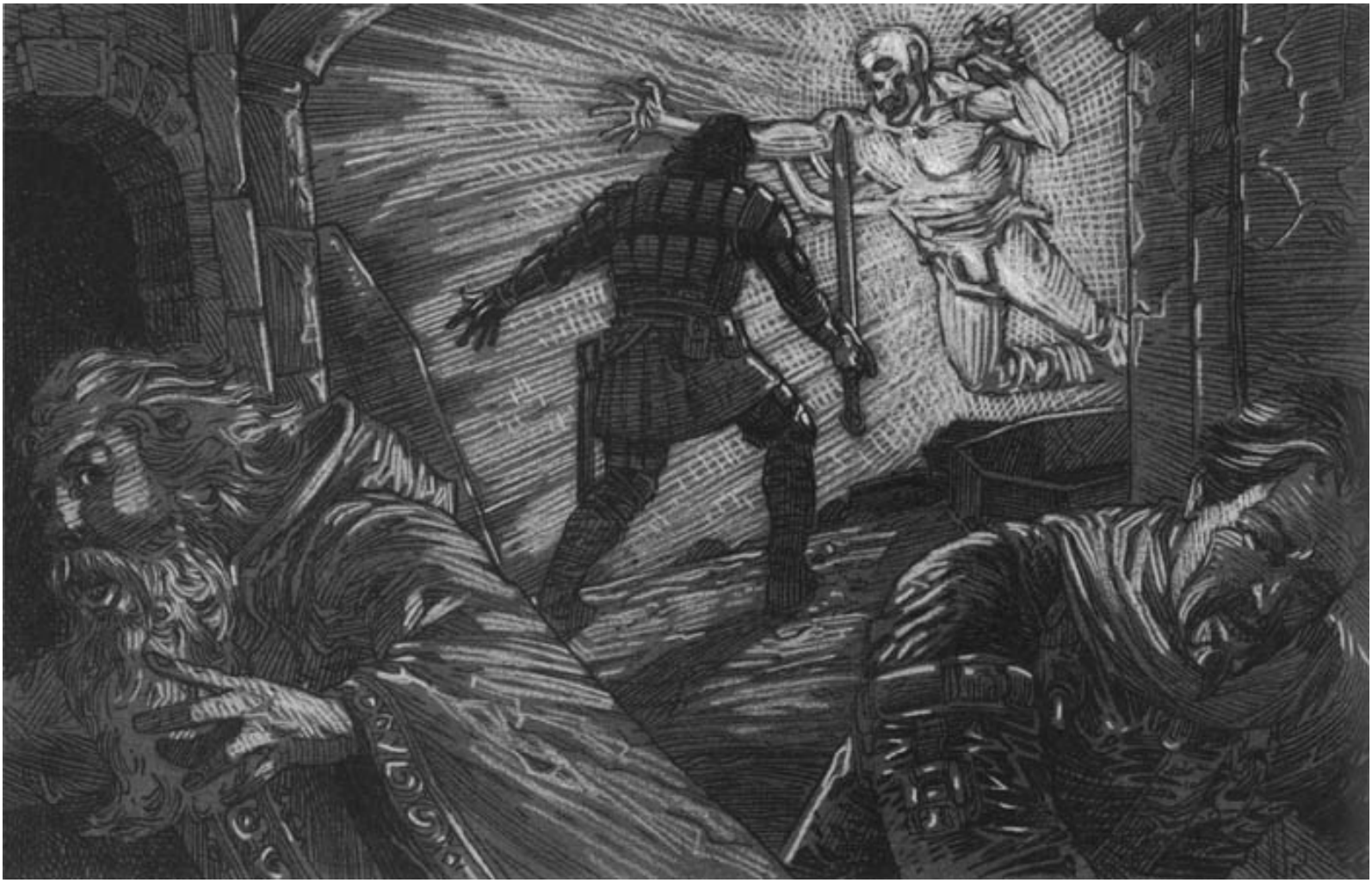
Fear and horror checks are designed to promote role-playing by forcing players to have their characters act frightened in frightening situations. Players who know that a failed check can have long lasting effects on their characters will begin to role-play encounters that would normally call for fear or horror checks in order to avoid having to make those checks. Before long, this tactic should have even the most hardened rules lawyer or war garner role-playing his heart out.

While individual Dungeon Masters may wish to extend this grace to include madness checks, it is recommended that even the best role-players be asked to roll dice when subjected to such traumatic effects.

Fear Checks

Fear is a natural aspect of the human psyche. This valuable safety mechanism often overrides all other factors, leading a character to flee or hide from something that might prove injurious, fatal, or even damning. Like a doctor's prescription, fear can be a life-saving draught when taken in moderation.

Sometimes, however, truly terrible events can push a person beyond the bounds of normal fear and into a state of panicked terror. Such an excessive volume of fear, like an overdose of otherwise beneficial medicine, can lead only to ruin and disaster. Fear checks are a game mechanic designed to simulate the often catastrophic effects of fright on adventurers.



When to Make a Fear Check

A number of conditions, called triggers, can force a hero to make a fear check. Some of these are strictly aspects of game mechanics, while others depend upon the setting and atmosphere of the adventure.

Game Events

As a rule, a fear check is required when a hero finds himself confronted with an overwhelming threat. In some cases, the hero may overestimate the danger, but if he believes the menace he faces is far more powerful than he can handle, he may still be forced to make a fear check. Conversely, if a hero does not believe the threat before him to be deadly, no fear check is usually required.

Below is a list of some of the most common fear check triggers. These assume that the party faces some manner of monster or other attacker.

Common Fear Check Triggers

- The Hit Dice of the monster total more than twice those of the entire party confronting it.
- The monster can inflict enough damage in a single round to kill the character with the most hit points.
- The monster is immune to all of the party's weapons and spells.
- The monster is at least two size categories greater than the largest member of the party.

Role-Playing Triggers

Of course, all the aforementioned triggers are based on game mechanics. Players will almost always be ignorant of things like the Hit Dice rating of the monster before them. However, fear checks can be triggered by events in the game as well.

Often, the Dungeon Master should base the need for a fear check on the reactions of the players or the environment in which the characters find themselves.

Confident Players: If a player appears confident of victory, no fear check need be made for his character. Of course, such a player may well be making a big mistake. After all, Strahd von Zarovich looks more or less like a normal man. A warrior might well be convinced that he could easily defeat him. The warrior would not need to make a fear check at the start of such a fight, although he might well make one when the magnitude of his folly is made clear. If he survives, he will probably be more cautious in the future.

Hesitant Players: Should a player seem hesitant and uncertain about battling the creature which confronts his character, the Dungeon Master should have him make a Wisdom check.

A successful check indicates that the character will act in the manner most dictated by the list of triggers above. Thus, if any of the listed conditions apply, a fear check will be required. If none of those conditions apply, no check is needed.

A failed Wisdom check indicates that the hero has misjudged the menace before him. Thus, he must make a fear check where one would ordinarily not be required and vice versa. This can, of course, be disastrous.

Frightened Players: If a player clearly appears convinced that the creature before him presents a great threat to his character, the Dungeon Master is well within his rights to mandate a fear check. This is true even in the case of creatures that are all but harmless.

For example, a player whose character is exploring the dungeons beneath Castle Ravenloft might well be convinced that the giant centipedes he encounters are far more dangerous than they truly are. (Perhaps they possess deadly venom, some magical attack, or worse....) In such cases, a fear check is probably in order.

The Environment

Fear checks are most frequently made during combat, when the level of physical danger is almost certainly at its highest. Additionally, a number of conditions can occur outside of combat that might, at the Dungeon Master's discretion, require

fear checks.

It is important to keep in mind the fact that these checks need be made in only the most extreme cases. Consider the first example given below: an unexpectedly triggered trap. If, while walking through the woods, a party of adventurers sees their scout suddenly yanked into the air by a well-hidden snare, they are more likely to burst out laughing than run in fear. The same party, exploring the dank labyrinth around a vampire's crypt, would react differently if the same scout were suddenly bisected by a great blade springing from the wall.

Unexpected Traps: Whenever a character triggers an unexpected trap, it has a chance of breaking the party's nerve. The key word here is "unexpected". If the heroes are watching a thief search for traps, they are not usually too surprised if he sets one off.

As a rule, the chance that any given trap will cause those who witness its effects to make a fear check is based upon the damage it inflicts. For every point of damage suffered by the target, each character who witnesses his predicament has a 2% chance of needing a fear check. Particularly gruesome or savage traps double this chance, while those that are especially subtle in their operation halve it.

Sudden Isolation: When a group of adventurers is suddenly split up or an entire party finds itself cut off from its expected escape route, the nerve of even the bravest adventurer is tested.

Consider the case of a party moving along a narrow tunnel in search of some terrible monster. One by one, the characters move through the darkness keeping a careful watch ahead and behind, when suddenly, the first (or last) person in line falls through a trap door and slides down a long chute. As the victim reaches the pitch black area at its end, a fear check might well be in order. After all, while the character has no reason to believe that he is in any immediate danger, his imagination will almost certainly whip up a few terrible fates that might be looming around him.

Of course, if the character who vanished down the chute was the most powerful member of the party, those left behind might be the ones who feel isolated. In that case, they might well feel overcome with panic while the fallen character is standing up and dusting himself off calmly.

Witnessing Something Sinister: Ravenloft is a haven for macabre and sinister things. When a hero happens upon something dark and terrible, it may be more than his nerve can bear. In such cases, a fear check is mandated.

If while exploring the jungle island that looks to be their new home, the survivors of a shipwreck come upon the remains of a cannibal's feast, they are likely to become frightened. This is especially true if the evidence indicates that the cannibals greatly outnumber the adventurers.

Dark Secrets: Just as the Demiplane of Dread has its share of monsters and beasts, so too is it rich with mysteries and puzzles. From time to time, discovering these secrets can fill any adventurer with fear.

A group of heroes caught in a terrible storm might count themselves lucky to find refuge in a monastery. When they stumble across a tome that records the demise of a similar group and reveals that their hosts are vampires, however, it may be time for the Dungeon Master to mandate a few fear checks.

How to Make a Fear Check

Fear checks function much like saving throws. Each character has a fear check number, determined by his class and level. (For details, see Appendix Three: Character Classes.) When a player is instructed to make a fear check, he rolls 1 d20 and compares it to his character's fear check number. The following table lists adjustments applied to the die roll.

Table 4: Fear Check Modifiers

Modifier	Condition
+?/-?	Magic Defence Adjustment (based on Wisdom Score)
+4	Character or party possesses a spell, magical item, weapon, or bit of knowledge which has already proven effective against this particular threat.
+2	Character or party possesses a spell, magical item, weapon, or bit of knowledge which is believed to be effective against this threat.
+4	A relative or fellow player character is endangered.
+2	A friend or ally is clearly endangered.
+1	An innocent is endangered.
+2	Character has faced and defeated a similar threat within the last twenty-four hours.
+1	Character has faced and defeated a similar threat in the past (but not within the last twenty-four hours).
-2	Character has faced and been defeated by a similar foe within the last twenty-four hours.
-1	Character has faced and been defeated by a similar threat in the past (but not within the last twenty-four hours).

If the adjusted die roll is equal to or greater than the fear check number, the character resists the terror that momentarily threatened to overcome him. If this happens, play resumes normally. If the die roll is less than the character's fear check number, however, the character fails. When this happens, he is overcome by terror and, at least for a few seconds, allows his emotions to dictate his actions. For these checks, a roll of 20 always succeeds, and a roll of 1 always fails.

Effects of Failure

When overcome with fear, heroes respond in many ways. Depending upon the exact situation, the Dungeon Master may wish to dictate the actions of the characters. If not, the player can be asked to roll 1d6. The Dungeon Master can then consult the following chart for the results (described on the next page). Modifiers can be added to the die roll as indicated below the chart.

Table 5: Failed Fear Check Results (1d6)

1. Fumble	6. Flee
2. Gape	7. Faint
3. Scream	8. Horror
4. Stagger	9. Madness
5. Hide	10. System Shock

Modifier	Condition
+1	Character is alone (or can't be quickly reached by allies).
+1	Character is a spellcaster with fewer than half of his spells remaining.
+1	Character has lost more than half of his maximum hit points.
+1	Character has failed a fear, horror, or madness check within the last twenty-four hours

The results from **Table 5** are fully described below. In some cases, these effects are minor and can be overcome quickly. Sometimes, however, a failed fear check can be catastrophic.

Fumble

A character who suffers this effect is so startled that he jumps back in fear and drops anything he was holding, including weapons. A saving throw vs. fall must be attempted for each dropped item (see Chapter 6 of the Dungeon Master Guide).

Gape

In the face of great fear, indecision overwhelms the gaping character. He stands paralyzed with fear for the entire round, moving only if one of his companions physically forces him to. A gaping character takes no action to defend himself, thus losing any advantage to his Armor Class that might have been gained by a shield or high Dexterity score. In addition, any strike directed at the character gains a +2 attack bonus.

Scream

The character screams at the top of his lungs and jumps back in fear. This causes him to forfeit any action he might make this turn (although he can still defend himself from attack). In addition to this loss, the Dungeon Master must determine the exact effect of the character's screams. At the very least, the fearful hero will draw unwanted attention to himself and spoil any chance of surprising his foes.

Stagger

The character staggers back, trips, and falls. He must make a successful Dexterity check for each item in his hands or drop it. Any dropped item must make a successful saving throw vs. fall to avoid damage. Until the character spends an action regaining his feet, he is considered prone and, thus, more vulnerable to attack.

Hide

In order to save himself from what he believes to be certain doom, the hero cowers in the corner, dives under a table, or otherwise seeks shelter. If the character can find no place to hide, he must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. A failed saving throw indicates that the character faints (as described below). A successful saving throw indicates that the character turns and flees in terror (as detailed below).

If the hero is a rogue or other character with the ability to hide in shadows, he may make use of this special skill. The panic that grips him, however, is so great that his skill is cut in half during this hasty retreat. Also, he may not use his ability if the conditions of the encounter would normally prohibit him from doing so.

Flee

The character, putting all considerations but self-preservation aside, turns and runs. In most cases, he retraces the route that brought him to the location of the encounter. If that is not possible, he flees in a random direction (determined by the Dungeon Master) which will move him away from the object of his fear.

A fleeing character moves at his maximum movement rate for the duration of the flight. If the terrain over which he runs is rough or treacherous, the Dungeon Master may require saving throws or ability checks to avoid falling. No fleeing character can attempt to move silently, search for traps, or otherwise act in a logical, calculating manner.

Faint

This character simply cannot deal with the threat before him. His eyes roll back in his head, his knees buckle, and he collapses to the ground. While the character is not injured by this fall, he drops any item that he was carrying; the item must make a successful saving throw vs. fall to avoid damage.

Horror

A horrified character has seen more than his mind can accept. The Dungeon Master should roll again using **Table 7: Failed Horror Check Results** to see what fate has befallen the character. All normal modifiers apply.

Madness

Just as it is possible for the effects of a failed fear check to bloom into horror, so too can they grow unchecked into madness. Of course, only a character who has already suffered a great deal of abuse need worry about this possibility. When this result appears, the Dungeon Master should roll again using **Table 9: Failed Madness Check Results** to determine the fate of the character. All normal modifiers apply.

System Shock

Any character who reaches this level of fear will simply clutch at his chest, gasp for breath, and collapse. Friends might assume he has fainted, but the truth is far worse. In actuality, the character teeters on the verge of death. Of course, he drops anything he is carrying and all such objects must make successful saving throws vs. fall or be damaged.

An immediate system shock roll must be made for the character. Failure indicates that the character has, literally, been scared to death. While magic might be used to revive him, he is beyond the help of the healer's herbs and powders.

If the system shock roll succeeds, the character has a chance to survive. His Constitution score is reduced by one point, and he is instantly reduced to 0 hit points and assumed to be hovering on death's door (as described in Chapter 9 of the DUNGEON MASTER Guide). If he does not receive prompt medical attention, he will lose 1 hit point per round until he reaches -10, at which point, the character dies.

Recovering From Fear

Throwing off the effects of a fear check ranges in difficulty from fairly easy (as in the case of someone who has fainted) to very difficult (as for those who have been shunted to the failed horror or madness checks) to virtually impossible (for those who have simply dropped dead).

While certain actions by the allies of the character or magical spells might aid in the mastery of fear, the following descriptions are the accepted standard. Unusual cases must, as always, be dealt with by the Dungeon Master.

Minor Effects

A character who has received a fumble, gape, stagger, or scream result will return to normal on the next round. His is a passing fear, quickly accepted and mastered.

Moderate Effects

A hero who hid, fled, or fainted is somewhat worse off. In each case, it will be a full turn (ten minutes) before the character returns to normal.

Others may try to snap the panicked hero out of his trauma during that time. Someone who has fainted can be awakened with smelling salts or cold water, a cowering individual might be soothed or reassured by a charismatic (and trusted) companion, and so forth. The Dungeon Master must resolve such attempts based on their merit and practicality.

Major Effects

Characters who have been horrified, driven mad, or undergone a severe system shock are in far worse shape. In all cases, it may be a long time before they return to normal. Of course, magic can greatly reduce this time, but such wondrous aid is not always available.

Rules for recovery from horror and madness are provided later in this chapter. Characters referred to those sections by **Table 5** should use the rules presented there. Characters who have suffered system shock are either dead (in which case, only magic can help them) or badly injured. Both magic and normal healing can restore a surviving character to health.

Role-Playing the Fear Check

As mentioned numerous times before, the RAVENLOFT game does not focus on rules, tables, and dice - although these are certainly important in its play. Instead, it is a game of nightmares, heroism, and the imagination. Players who recognize this fact and run their characters in accordance with the environment must be rewarded for their efforts.

To that end, any player whose hero acts in a frightened manner when the situation dictates that he should do so becomes immune to fear checks. This game mechanic is intended to promote role-playing by simulating the sorts of reactions that should occur in a frightening situation.

Horror Checks

In most RAVENLOFT games, there comes a time when the heroes are forced to confront something so terrible that they can scarcely believe it to be real. Perhaps they must watch as a loved one undergoes a terrible transformation at the hands of a vile beast, or endure the loathsome kiss of some bloodsucking creature as it feeds upon the nectar in their veins. Whatever the cause, horrified characters will be slow in recovering from the terror in their hearts.

When to Make a Horror Check



Exactly what causes someone to become horrified varies greatly from person to person. The mere sight of an undead creature will require normal men and women to make a horror check and may well have the same effect on a low- level adventurer. Indeed, a dead body, especially one that clearly died a terrible death, might also overwhelm such characters.

As a rule, horror is a much more emotional state than fear. The latter is a basic survival instinct which, to some degree, every person experiences. Horror, on the other hand, occurs in moments of great anguish, grief, or repugnance. Horror, it can be said, forms the boundary between common fear and the collapse into madness.

While it is impossible to say for certain how any individual will react when exposed to a potentially horrific situation, the following guidelines can help determine how members of various character classes might react in certain situations.

Warriors

Warriors, especially those who have been adventuring for some time, are generally used to sights of death, battle, and violence. They have probably seen friends die in battle before and are not going to be shaken by even the most gruesome scene of carnage.

On the other hand, a warrior is not accustomed to magic and the supernatural. While the sight of a wizard casting a spell is not going to shock them, the effects of that spell might. A warrior's world is built around arms and battle; magic that defies the rules he has come to live by will certainly rattle him. Macabre and supernatural things which a wizard might accept without blinking are more than the average warrior is used to dealing with. Witnessing the effects of a medusa's gaze, watching the vile feeding of an illithid, or feeling the chilling touch of an ethereal, invisible creature might horrify even the most stoic of warriors.



Wizards

Wizards are, in many ways, mirror images of the warriors they travel with. Their lives revolve around strange and mysterious pursuits, making them more resistant to sights like transformations and spectral beings. Interdimensional creatures and scintillating portals leading to blasphemous regions of eternal suffering are the sorts of things that wizards expect to find around every corner.

On the other hand, a wizard does not have the warrior's taste for battle, death, or blood. Sights of carnage and gore generally revolt them. Also, because of their keen intellects, wizards can sometimes sense the true terrors of a situation long before their allies really understand what is happening.

Priests

As servants of the many gods of the multiverse, priests are gifted with a sense of well-being and confidence that many other characters lack. Their belief that their only purpose in life is to serve their patron deity provides them with resistance to things that others might find horrific.

Like warriors, they normally do not fear battle and combat. In their roles as protectors of the faith, they have seen wars and death. As healers, they have moved among the wounded and dying. The perils of the physical world usually do not seem horrific to these valiant souls.

Similarly, priests are familiar with magic and the supernatural. While not as steeped in the macabre as wizards, they are not likely to find themselves mentally overwhelmed by even the most sinister of magics.

It is the very strength of the priest that also proves his weakness, however. A priest is always especially sensitive to those things that challenge his religious beliefs or the teachings of his god. Acts of terrible blasphemy can traumatize even the most pious cleric. This is especially true if the horrific scene causes the priest to believe that his god's power is limited or even nullified in a given area.

Rogues

No class is more diverse than that of rogues, making it difficult to provide sweeping guidelines about what will and will not horrify these heroes. Some are vile characters who trade in death, murder, and assassination. These brigands are as used to carnage or gore as any warrior and perhaps just as vulnerable to sights of magic and the macabre. Others, jewel thieves and the like, may be less accustomed to death or battle and still fear the supernatural or diabolical.

Whatever their chosen profession, however, all rogues depend upon secrecy and stealth. Nothing is more frightening to a rogue than the sense that he is exposed and vulnerable. A carefully hidden rogue who has watched a nosferatu drain the blood of a young woman might be able to bear the sight with only minor revulsion. Should the dread creature then turn and look directly at him, making it clear that he will be the next victim, the true horror of what he has just seen comes crashing down upon the hero.

How to Make a Horror Check

Making a horror check is conducted in exactly the same fashion as a fear check or saving throw. When a player is called upon to make a horror check, he rolls ld20, applies any relevant modifiers, and compares the total to a target number determined by his character's class and level. (For details, see Appendix Three: Character Classes.)

Table 6: Horror Check Modifiers

Modifier	Condition
+?/-?	Magic Defence Adjustment (based on Wisdom Score)
+4	Character or party possesses a spell, magical item, weapon, or bit of knowledge which has already proven effective against this particular threat.
+2	Character or party possesses a spell, magical item, weapon, or bit of knowledge which is believed to be effective against this threat.
+4	A relative or fellow player character is endangered.
+2	A friend or ally is clearly endangered.
+1	An innocent is endangered.
-1	An innocent willingly participates in the horrific scene.
-2	A friend or ally willingly participates in the horrific scene.
-4	A relative or fellow player character willingly participates in the horrific scene.
-1	Character is of good alignment.
-1	Character is of lawful alignment.
+1	Character is of chaotic alignment.
+1	Character is of evil alignment.
-1	Character is in close quarters (no place to run).
+1	Character is in an open area (room to run away).
+2	Hero has overcome or endured a similar scene within the past twenty-four hours.
+1	Hero has overcome or endured a similar scene in the past (but not within the last twenty-four hours).
-2	Hero has been horrified by a similar scene within the past twenty-four hours.
-1	Hero has been horrified by a similar scene in the past (but not within the last twenty-four hours).

If the modified roll equals or exceeds the target number, the character shrugs off the effects of the scene and may continue normally. This is not to say that he remains utterly calm or unmoved by the things he has seen, only that he is able to cope with his horror and suffers no measurable penalty. If the modified roll is less than the target number, the character has been overwhelmed by the horrors around him. A roll of 20 always succeeds, and a roll of 1 always fails.

The many and varied results of failure are described below.

Effects of Failure

A horrified character will find the effects of this highly emotional state both lasting and debilitating. When a character fails a horror check, the Dungeon Master should roll 1d6 and consult the following table. Modifiers to the die roll and a description of each condition appear at right.

Table 7: Failed Horror Check Results (1d6)

1. Fear
2. Aversion
3. Nightmares
4. Revulsion
5. Obsession
6. Rage
7. Mental Shock
8. Fascination
9. Madness
10. System Shock

Modifier	Condition
+1	Character is alone (or can't be quickly reached by allies).
+1	Character is a spellcaster with fewer than half of his spells remaining.

+1 Character has lost more than half of his maximum hit points.
+1 Character has failed a fear, horror, or madness check within the last twenty-four hours

Fear

A fearstruck character has managed to avoid the horror of the scene before him, though he still succumbs to fear. In such cases, the effect of the failed check is resolved using Table 5: Failed Fear Check Results. No die modifiers apply to this roll.

Aversion

The horror of the scene proves too much for the character to bear. He whirls and flees, moving at his maximum rate for one full turn (ten minutes). At the end of that time, he comes to his senses. For the next month or so, however, he cannot bear to go within fifty feet of the place where the failed check occurred or any identical places.

If the character is forced to violate these restrictions (or if he accidentally does so) he must attempt another horror check. A successful check allows the character to remain in the presence of the horrific scene, but he suffers a -4 penalty on all attack rolls; saving throws; and fear, horror, and madness checks while in the area. Should the character fail this second horror check, the normal effects of such misfortunes apply.

Nightmares

At first it appears that a character who rolled this result is simply fearstruck. His immediate actions are determined by rerolling and consulting **Table 5**. The next time the character tries to sleep, however, it becomes clear that he is badly traumatized.

As soon as the character falls asleep, he begins to have terrible nightmares in which the horrific events play themselves out repeatedly. Within half an hour after retiring (5d6 minutes, to be precise), the hero suddenly awakens with a terrible scream. Every attempt at sleep will have the same result, leaving the character an exhausted wreck.

For every twenty-four hours that the character goes without a full night's rest, he suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and ability/proficiency checks, up to a maximum penalty of -4.

A sleepless night also denies the character a chance to heal. Thus, the only way that someone burdened with nightmares can recover from injuries is through magic. Characters with the ability to regenerate can still do so. If the character is a spellcaster, his inability to sleep makes it impossible to rest and memorize new spells. As the nightmares also disrupt attempts by psionicists to rest and meditate, those characters are unable to regain expended PSPs while suffering from nightmares (see the "Psionicists" section in Appendix Three).

In short order, sleepless nights will begin to take a toll on even the most hardy individual. For every week that a character suffers from nightmares, his Constitution score temporarily falls one point. Any associated benefits, like bonus hit points or saving throw adjustments are affected as well. If the character's Constitution score falls to zero, he dies.

A *sleep* spell can ward off the nightmares for a time. A character under the effects of such magic will be able to get enough rest to memorize new spells or regain PSPs. In addition, someone aided with a *sleep* spell will not receive penalties to his attack rolls, saving throws, and the like. However, this supernatural slumber is not sufficient to allow normal healing or prevent the loss of Constitution points.

Revulsion

Revulsion is a more powerful form of aversion. In addition to the effects described earlier, the character is unable to stand the presence of things even vaguely reminiscent of whatever horrified him. Someone forced to watch as a nosferatu drained the life from his younger sister might find that the sight of red wine, a cut of rare meat, or even the trickle that follows the nick of a shaving razor will fill him with revulsion.

Obsession

An obsessed character suffers the same negative effects associated with nightmares. His nights are so filled with visions of the terrible things he has endured that his health gradually deteriorates from loss of sleep. The use of a sleep spell provides the same relief to obsessed characters as it does to those suffering from nightmares.

During the day, however, the character's mind remains clouded. He will speak about the horrifying event constantly, describe everything in terms relating to it, and mumble to himself about it when he is alone.

Such single-minded devotion has negative effects even beyond those suffered by the victims of nightmares. Because of the haze that dulls the perceptions of an obsessed character, he suffers a -1 penalty to his initiative and surprise rolls, beginning immediately after the failed horror check. Each week that passes increases this modifier by one point, to a maximum penalty of -4.

Rage

An enraged character becomes instantly overwhelmed by the desire to destroy the thing that offends him. If he is powerful enough to succeed, then this is not a terrible result. If he is not, then rage can be fatal.

The enraged character must move toward the cause of his horror at his maximum movement rate and engage it in melee combat. It is impossible for an enraged character to use spells, psionic powers, or ranged weapons. His mind reverts to a state of primitive fury that only brutal violence can mollify.

So feral has his mind become at this point that he casts aside anything in his hands that is not a weapon. Each of these items must make a successful saving throw vs. fall to avoid damage. If the character does not have a weapon available, he will either attack with his bare hands or grab up some manner of bludgeon.

A character with a shield or other object in hand might avoid discarding it (as required above) if the player states an intention to use it as bludgeon. Of course, fragile objects wielded as weapons may well be damaged or destroyed. In such cases, the Dungeon Master might require the player to make a successful saving throw vs. crushing blow for the item to avoid such a fate.

Each attack or damage roll made by the enraged character receives a +2 bonus because of the fury surging through his muscles. However, the bestial nature of this rage leaves the character exposed to attack, for he thinks little about self defense. This causes him to lose any benefits due to a shield or high Dexterity score. In addition, all strikes directed at him receive a +2 attack bonus.

So powerful a rage is not easily thrown off. Even after the character slays the object of his rage, he will continue to strike at it. If such a character is left to himself, he is entitled to a make a new horror check every third round. Success indicates that he has come to his senses. Failure results in another three rounds of rage.

Anyone who attempts to restrain the enraged character will become his new target. Magical spells, like sleep or emotion can end the character's fury without drawing his attention.

Another player character can attempt to talk the character out of his rage. Such an attempt requires one round and a successful Charisma check. If the check succeeds, the enraged character comes to his senses. If it fails, he continues to batter away at his target. An unmodified roll of 20 indicates that the enraged character feels betrayed and will transfer his rage to his friend.

For the next month or so (see "Recovering from Horror" below) the character may be thrown into a rage whenever he encounters a scene or creature similar to the object of his horror. At such times, a new horror check is made, with an additional -2 penalty. If the check fails, the character becomes enraged again.

Mental Shock

Sometimes, the only response one is capable of when confronted with something horrible is simple inaction. In such cases of mental shock, the character's mind seems to simply shut down, causing him to stand and stare at the offensive sight.

A character suffering from mental shock will take no action to defend himself, even if attacked repeatedly. Thus, he gains no benefit to Armor Class for a shield or high Dexterity score. Obviously, such a character cannot attack, cast spells, use psionics, or take any other action. A shocked character will follow a companion only if dragged along. Such movement is involuntary, however, and is limited to half the normal rate of the stunned character.

Future encounters with the horrific scene or one similar to it may also overwhelm the character. Such an experience entitles the character to another horror check (albeit with a -2 penalty). Failure indicates that he again finds himself gripped by this terrible affliction.

Fascilation

Fascination in many ways resembles obsession, save that the victim appears to openly embrace the sight that horrified him. He spends every waking and sleeping moment thinking about whatever he has seen, and he even begins to incorporate it into his personality, resulting in a degradation of his own character. A classic example of such behavior can be seen in Renfield's attempts to emulate the horrific life-draining actions of his master in Bram Stoker's Dracula.

These changes in a character's personality cause him to become more and more offensive to those around him. On the day after the character is horrified, his Charisma and Wisdom each fall one point. At the end of every week, an additional point is subtracted from each ability score. When either (or both) of these scores reaches zero, the character is assumed to have been driven mad. At that time, the Dungeon Master should roll on **Table 9: Failed Madness Check Results** to see what form his lunacy takes.

Should the character come into the presence of the thing that horrified him (or something similar to it) while still in the grip of his fascination, his condition will manifest itself in one of two ways.

It at all possible, the fascinated character will join the scene. He will not join it if doing so would clearly be suicidal, but he may well give away the location of the party or other secrets without concern.

Should it prove impossible for him to undertake that course, he will set aside all other concerns to observe and study the scene. During this encounter, he will take no action to harm or disrupt the horrid scene and its participants, although he may allow his companions to do so. Only if they directly challenge his actions will the fascinated character act against his companions.

Madness

The strain of recent events proves too much for the character. Somehow, this horrifying scene causes his mind to collapse into madness. The Dungeon Master should skip to **Table 9: Failed Madness Check Results** to determine what happens to the horrified character. All normal modifiers apply to this second roll.

System Shock

Just as the icy grip of fear can crush the life from a man's heart, so too can the effects of horror drive him to an early grave. A player who rolls this result must make an instant system shock survival roll with a -10% penalty.

A failed roll causes the character to simply fall dead. Attempts to revive him will fail, although magical means might be employed to this end. If the roll is successful, the character has a chance to survive. His Constitution falls one point to reflect the strain on his health, and he is instantly reduced to 0 hit points. If he does not receive immediate aid, the character will lose 1 hit point per round until he reaches -10, at which point he dies. Complete rules governing this condition are detailed in Chapter 9 of the DUNGEON MASTER Guide.

In either case, the character drops any items he was carrying. A saving throw vs. fall should be made for each item to determine whether or not it sustains damage.

Recovering From Horror

Some effects of a failed horror check may be set aside more easily than others. In most cases, however, a horrified character will feel its effects for several weeks.

Minor Effects

Characters who suffer from an aversion are the least affected by what they have seen. By mentally bracing themselves and trying to understand what lies at the heart of their trauma, they can generally restore themselves to normal in a few weeks.

At the end of every fortnight following their perilous encounter, these characters should make another horror check. Success indicates that the character has won his battle against horror and returns to normal, although he will probably always be somewhat affected by the things he was exposed to. If the horror check fails, the character continues to suffer for another fortnight, when he can again attempt to throw it off.

Moderate Effects

Other effects last longer than aversion. Once per month, a character who suffers from nightmares, revulsion, obsession, or rage can attempt to escape his mental bonds by making another horror check. A failed attempt at recovery indicates that he must endure his burden for another month before attempting again.

Major Effects

Those shocked or fascinated by what they have seen will have a much harder time slipping the bond of horror. Like the sufferers described above, they are entitled to additional horror checks each month. Success indicates that they leave their fears behind. In the case of these major effects, however, the checks each bear a -2 penalty.

Magical Spells and Psionic Powers

A character's recovery from a failed horror check can be greatly speeded with the aid of magic or psionics. A *forget* spell

could erase the memory of the horrific event, for example, eliminating the trauma associated with it. Other possible cures might include psychic surgery or the judicious use of hypnosis. Also, both a *wish* and *limited wish* spell should prove efficacious.

Of course, the human mind (especially when it has been traumatized) is not something to be tampered with by the unwise. Dungeon Masters should carefully watch the actions of those treating the horrified, for the result of failure might well be madness.

Role-Playing the Horror Check

Just as a player can avoid the negative effects of a fear check by having his character act in an appropriate manner, so too can he negate the game effects of horror. If the Dungeon Master feels that a player character is responding to horrific scenes with the proper revulsion and disgust, he need not require that character to make a horror check.

In some cases, the Dungeon Master may wish to roll for the effects of a failed horror check, asking that his player incorporate only its role-playing effects rather than impose the game mechanics indicated. If the player is up to such a demanding bit of role-playing, he can greatly enhance the macabre realism of the game.

Madness Checks



The human mind is truly a wondrous thing, both complex beyond our understanding and powerful beyond our measurements. Sadly, it is also fragile and finely tuned. When confronted by the terrors and abominations lurking in the swirling Mists of Ravenloft, the careful balances between logic and emotion, reality and imagination, can be shattered. Thus, those who wander the Demiplane of Dread end up in asylums as often as they do the grave.

In game terms, madness can be thought of as the ultimate form of both fear and horror. A person confronted with a great menace often allows his animal instincts to take over. As fear grips him, he turns and flees. When it becomes clear that there is something macabre and supernatural about the menace, his senses are shaken, and his basic view of the world is disturbed. In the presence of such a threat, horror thus replaces fear. Lastly, repeated assaults on mind and body can endanger the victim's sanity. It is then that madness overwhelms the character, allowing him to escape the horrors of the Demiplane by retreating into an imaginary world of his own design.

When to Make a Madness Check

Thankfully, very few occasions call for a hero to make a madness check. The severity of this condition is mitigated only by its relative rarity.

Certain events can mandate madness checks, just as for fear and horror checks. These rare events are brought about by the actions of the character as often as by the twists of fate and the world around them.

Direct Mental Contact

One of the most common triggers for a madness check is direct mental contact with an alien or insane mind. When two characters link minds, each must deal with the thoughts and mental patterns of the other. Thus, it matters little which side establishes such contact.

Making Contact: A number of spells and magical items might allow a character to glimpse the minds of others. When the character examines the mind of a creature similar to himself, he faces no danger of madness. However, when he crosses certain racial and mental boundaries, madness becomes a distinct possibility.

Among the wizard spells known to cause madness are *Bloodstone's frightful joining, Strahd's frightful joining, contact other*

plane, *ESP*, *know alignment*, and *wizard sight*. By the same token, priest magic can also endanger the mind of the user. Among the spells that can threaten the sanity of a character are *commune*, *detect lie*, *divine inspiration*, *genius*, *group mind*, *idea*, *know alignment*, *mind read*, *rapport*, *speak with dead*, *thought broadcast*, and *thought capture*.

Many magical items afford contact with other minds and, thus, also carry the risk of inspiring madness. These include the *claw of magic stealing*, *crystal ball*, *crystal parrot*, *helm of telepathy*, *medallion of ESP*, *mirror of mental prowess*, and *thought bottle*.

Of course, psionicists (especially telepaths) regularly peer into the minds of others, so they must constantly be on their guard lest they allow the seed of madness to take root in the fertile soil of their brains. Even an exchange of blows in psionic combat can result in madness if one is not prepared for the touch of an opponent's mind.

Dark Thoughts: Once two minds have embraced each other, the Dungeon Master must consider their affinity for each other. After all, a trained telepath is not likely to be disturbed in the least as he sifts through the thoughts of another human being. Of course, if he discovers that the supposed human is a doppleganger, he may be in for something of a shock. Mental contact with any of the following types of creatures is assumed to require a madness check:

- Those who are utterly inhuman, such as beholders, morkoths, and cloakers.
- Intelligent plants, such as doppleganger plants, phycomids, and treants.
- Creatures from the Inner or Outer Planes, such as fiends, fire elementals, and golems (since the animating force of a golem is a minor creature from the Elemental Planes).
- Creatures of the Mists, such as Mist horrors and Mist ferrymen. (This does not include the dark powers. While it is certain that contact with them would require a madness check, it has always proven impossible to attain such contact.)
- The lord of any Ravenloft domain.
- An insane mind (that is, anyone suffering the effects of a failed madness check).
- A mind currently dominated (using either magic, natural abilities, or psionics) by any of the above.

While many other types of contact can require a character to make a madness check, the above list indicates the most common. By using it as a standard for comparisons, Dungeon Masters should have no problem deciding whether any other given creature falls into this category.

Breaking Point

Characters can also go mad due to events around them. While this fate can befall adventurers in any world, it is far more common in the Demiplane of Dread. Here, where horrors and evils seem to lurk in every shadow, no hero can truthfully claim to be unaffected.

Deciding when a character has reached the breaking point can be difficult. In many cases, the character can be pushed into madness via a failed horror or fear check. Still other times, the Dungeon Master will feel that a madness check is in order when no previous fear or horror check has been made. The following is a list of possible breaking points:

- The character has witnessed the destruction of the rest of the party and now stands alone in a very dangerous situation.
- The character is a paladin, ranger, priest, or other character with special abilities who has found himself stripped of these powers for misdeeds on his part.
- The character has undergone an involuntary alignment shift or suffered some similarly overwhelming mental transformation.
- The character has been subjected to some physical transformation far beyond the bounds of the normal world (for instance, his brain has been placed in the body of a golem or, worse yet, now floats inside a glass jar).

Induced Madness

Not everyone who has been driven mad traveled that road unassisted. Many are directed, or even forced, down the path of lunacy.

Magical Inducement: It is possible for a character to be affected by a magical spell or even placed under a curse with the sole purpose of driving him mad. Examples of this terrible fate are far more common than one would like to believe.

Depending upon the strength of the magic loosed on his mind, the character may be forced to make a madness check or even be automatically driven insane. Examples of the former might include repeated applications of a *hypnosis* or *neverending nightmare* spell, while the latter might be limited to spells as powerful as *wish* or *limited wish*. In either case, the Dungeon Master has final say in the matter.

Gaslighting: When someone sets out to drive another person mad, the Dungeon Master must determine the effectiveness of the effort. If the perpetrator has magic at his disposal, then the information presented above applies. If not, the perpetrator must attempt to gaslight his victim.

Even without the aid of magic, the evil Dr. Dominiani has worked for many years to drive his unsuspecting patients mad in hopes of studying the process and devising a cure for it - an admirable end, to be sure, but a less than noble means. Other examples of gaslighting might include a husband who seeks to rid himself of a shrewish wife by driving her mad, or a woman who marries wealthy men and then shatters their minds hoping that they will kill themselves and she will inherit their fortunes.

These guidelines are intended for use only on nonplayer characters. Dungeon Masters should not allow someone to gaslight a player character simply by making a die roll. With that understood, the following conditions must be met in order for a character to attempt to gaslight someone:

- The perpetrator must have higher Wisdom and Charisma scores than those of his victim.
- The perpetrator must be a close and trusted companion, friend, or family member of the victim.
- The perpetrator must remain in close proximity to the victim for thirty days, during which time he uses his influence over the character to convince him that his sanity is slipping away.

At the end of thirty days, the victim must make a madness check, with all of the normal modifiers. If the madness check fails, the victim suffers the normal effects of such a mishap. If the check succeeds, the character resists the efforts of the perpetrator. In addition, the victim is entitled to a Wisdom check which, if successful, allows him to realize what is being done to him. If the perpetrator's actions are not discovered, he may continue his efforts and force the victim to make another check in thirty more days.

As his victim attempts the forced madness check, the mental assailant must make a powers check. The chance that he will fail this roll is equal to his own Wisdom score, since clever individuals use more diabolical means to force their victims into lunacy.

How to Make a Madness Check

Madness checks are made in exactly the same fashion as fear and horror checks. When a player makes a madness check for his character, he rolls 1d20 and applies the modifiers listed below to the result.

Table 8: Madness Check Modifiers

Modifier	Condition
+?/-?	Magic Defence Adjustment (based on Wisdom Score)
-1	Character is of chaotic alignment.
+1	Character is of lawful alignment.
-2	Hero has been horrified by a similar scene within the past twenty-four hours.
-1	Hero has been horrified by a similar scene in the past (but not within the last twenty-four hours).

If this modified total is equal to or greater than the character's madness check number, as indicated by his class and level (for details, see Appendix Three: Character Classes), he successfully masters the assault on his mind and retains his sanity. If the roll is lower than the target number, however, the character fails the madness check, and deep within his psyche, something snaps. A roll of 20 always succeeds, and a roll of 1 always fails.

Effects of Failure

When a character fails a madness check, his mind may be damaged in many ways. The exact nature of a character's lunacy can be determined by consulting the table below.

Table 9: Failed Madness Check Results (1d6)

1. Horror
2. Depression
3. Catatonia
4. Delusions
5. Hallucinations
6. Schizophrenia
7. Paranoia
8. Amnesia
9. Multiple Personalities
10. System Shock

Modifier	Condition
+1	Character has a Wisdom of 9 or less.
+1	Character has a Charisma of 9 or less.
+1	Character is of chaotic alignment.
+1	Character has failed a fear, horror, or madness check within the last twenty-four hours.

Each of the types of madness listed on **Table 9** has its own unique effect on game play. The following entries describe these mental ailments in detail.

Horror

Some characters are fortunate enough to be able to throw off the effects of a madness check, though still suffering the hazards associated with horror. When this result appears, the Dungeon Master should refer to **Table 7: Failed Horror Check Results**. All of the normal modifiers apply.

Depression

A character whose mind is subjected to a truly terrible mental shock can even lose the will to live. Such a depressed person abandons all interest in life and effectively becomes a living zombie. Such a character will initiate no action, wanting only to be left alone. In any given situation, the character is 50% likely to do nothing, regardless of the matter's urgency, even if his personal well-being seems threatened.

If the roll indicates that the character is not interested in a situation, he will simply stand still, sit motionless, or wander around aimlessly. Any strike directed at the character receives a +4 attack bonus, and the depressed character automatically

fails all saving throws.

If the character does take an interest in the situation, it will be only a minor one. He will follow instructions given to him by his friends or companions (preferring to obey the directions of the character with highest Charisma score over all others). He undertakes these actions listlessly, however, receiving a -4 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and proficiency checks.

In either case, the depressed character is still subject to the effects of subsequent fear, horror, and madness checks. However, his absolute lack of interest actually provides a +4 bonus to all such rolls.

Catatonia

When a situation proves too overwhelming to deal with, the mind sometimes closes itself off. When this happens, the character collapses and appears to be in an incredibly deep trance. A catatonic character will sit motionless, responding to no external stimuli, regardless of events around him. The brain simply refuses to acknowledge any input it receives.

Because the character remains utterly motionless, he cannot defend himself in combat. Thus, attacks made against him succeed automatically, and all of his saving throws fail.

Any catatonic character, whether he is a psionicist or not, effectively employs both the tower of iron will and mind blank defenses. Thus, attempts to contact him mentally can prove very difficult.

Delusion

A character suffering from delusions believes himself to be something or someone he is not. Often, this newly adopted persona is someone the character greatly admires. For instance, a Knight of Solamnia (from the world of Krynn) might believe himself to be the reincarnation of the legendary knight Huma, or even Huma himself.

The player should be allowed to choose the form of the delusion, but the Dungeon Master can always veto any unreasonable suggestions. The best options are those relevant to the events that drove the character insane. Significantly, the player's choice need not reflect his true abilities or personality at all. The above mentioned Knight of Solamnia could feasibly believe himself to be the great wizard Palin or even the mighty Malystryx, greatest of the red dragons.

One of the most fascinating aspects of a delusion is the character's ability to rationalize away any evidence that might be used to disprove his new beliefs. A character who believes he is actually a dragon might respond to comments about his clearly human appearance by pointing out that he has been trapped in a human form. No argument will shake the character's faith in his delusion. Indeed, the deluded hero may even adopt a condescending attitude, feeling sorry for the poor souls (clearly madmen) who do not see him for who or what he is.

Hallucinations

Characters suffering from hallucinations see the world around them as a twisted and unusual place. In many ways, this can be considered the opposite of a delusion. Exactly how a character sees the world should be determined by the events that drove him mad.

Consider the example of Victallus, a warrior from the domain of Barovia. While traveling on the Sea of Sorrows, his ship sank, and he found himself under the care of the vile Dr. Dominiani. The mad doctor decided to induce a phobia of insects in the poor warrior's psyche as part of his research on madness. Although Victallus eventually escaped, his mind was shattered due to the ministrations of Dominiani. For over a year after he returned home, the young warrior saw insects everywhere. They crawled over his food, covered his bed, and swam in his bath water. It is a tribute to the warrior's courage that he was

ever able to regain his sanity in the wake of such terrors.

A character eventually becomes incapable of dealing rationally with hallucinations. A normal person seeing blood everywhere might eventually become inured to the horrifying sight, but not a hallucinating character. The hallucinations always cause an extreme emotional response, sometimes even completely overwhelming the victim. In game terms, the effects of a particularly overwhelming hallucination might be resolved with a fear or horror check. Of course, the effect of a failed check is merely a subset of the greater madness and does not require separate treatment.

Schizophrenia

A schizophrenic character can have sudden, and occasionally violent, changes in mood or personality. While the mind of such an individual is not as splintered as that of a multiple personality, others may perceive him in much the same way.

At the start of every week, or whenever a schizophrenic character experiences a stressful situation, his personality has a chance of changing drastically. In game terms, this entails sudden shifts in alignment. At such times, the Dungeon Master should roll 1d10 and consult the following chart to determine the character's new alignment:

Table 10: Schizophrenic Alignment Changes (1d1O)

1. Chaotic Good
2. Lawful Good
3. Neutral Good
4. Lawful Neutral
5. True Neutral
6. Chaotic Neutral
7. Neutral Evil
8. Lawful Evil
9. Chaotic Evil
10. Original Alignment

This is not considered an involuntary alignment shift, so none of those penalties apply to this change (including the making of a madness check). In addition, magic designed to detect alignment reveals only the character's true alignment, not that indicated by his aberration. Psionic powers, on the other hand, can determine the character's current alignment, subject to the normal restrictions found in Ravenloft.

Paranoia

Paranoid characters have an unreasoning fear of the world around them. The character sees plots and schemes everywhere; every action is meant to discredit, injure, or kill him. Even the members of his own party are not above suspicion.

At the start of each day, the Dungeon Master should select (either by choice or randomly) one member of the character's party. For the duration of the day, every action the selected character takes should be described to the player of the paranoid character in sinister and ominous ways. For example, a wizard putting an object in his backpack should be described as "taking careful steps to conceal something within the dark confines of his pack".

Descriptions of strangers or casual acquaintances should always hint that there is more to them than meets the eye. No one ever simply looks the player character over; instead, they are described as examining him "hungrily" or "with a predatory gleam".

If the character ever actually comes upon evidence of a plot against him, the Dungeon Master should require the player to attempt a horror check. Failure on this check yields normal results, except that they pass within twenty-four hours.

Amnezia

In an effort to throw off the horrors of the world, a character's mind can opt to simply block out some (or all) memory of the trauma it has suffered. In the most minor cases, the resulting amnesia is only partial, perhaps blocking out a few hours. In more traumatic cases, however, all memory of the past can vanish.

In game terms, amnesia is reflected in a loss of experience points and, thus, levels. When a character loses his memory, the Dungeon Master should roll percentile dice to discover what percentage of the character's life (and experience points) has been lost. On a roll of 75, a character with one hundred thousand experience points is reduced to twenty-five thousand experience points. In the event of an avenger character, this would indicate a drop from 7th level to 5th level. A roll of 100 indicates that the character loses all memory of his past and must be treated as a 0-level character until his mental health can be restored.

This memory loss does not usually eliminate a character's ability to make use of his proficiencies, although special abilities (like those of a thief) may be reduced in effectiveness. Similarly, a character's spell casting or psionic abilities, hit points, saving throws, and attack rolls will all reflect his new level. Spells like *restoration,* which are useful in restoring levels to those who have suffered level-draining attacks, do not restore lost memories.

Multiple Personalities

In very rare cases, a mind can try to protect itself from the violence and terrors of the world by splintering into several distinct personalities.

The Core: The character's original personality (or core) is assumed to be the base from which all others are drawn. When a character's core personality is in control of the body, he has access to all the abilities he had prior to failing his madness check.

Fragments: A character with multiple personalities may develop as many as one hundred distinct personas. Of these, however, most will be mere fragments who can have interest in only one thing. For instance, a fragment could be an avid top collector or musician. In game terms, a fragment can be built around a single nonweapon proficiency.

While a character with multiple personalities can be assumed to have 10d1O personality fragments, these usually have no place in play except as role-playing elements. Still, completists are welcome to create a list of the character's personality fragments and assign them each a skill or interest.

Alter Egos: A character with multiple personalities will also manifest a number of major alter egos (or alters) equal to 20% of the number of fragments he has formed. These personalities are real and distinct individuals. Even though each alter is usually aware that he shares the body with many others, he cannot be persuaded that any of them are less than "real".

An alter often believes he has special abilities and powers (like spellcasting or psionics) which the core persona does not have. In most cases, the alter cannot actually manifest these abilities, although he certainly appears very knowledgeable about them. Thus, an alter who believes himself to be a wizard might not be able to use spells, but could have access to the spellcraft proficiency.

Changing Personalities: In most cases, a character's alters surface only when he is alone or in the company of close friends. Thus, it is quite possible for a person with multiple personalities to appear normal at any given time. As the alters become more comfortable with those around them, they may become more willing to make themselves known.

The true danger of this form of madness occurs when the wrong personality controls the body during a crisis situation. Whenever the character experiences extreme stress, the player must make a madness check. If the check succeeds, the character's core personality remains dominant. A failed check, on the other hand, indicates that the character randomly switches to another personality. His actions must then be based upon the alter that surfaces. If the personality now in charge

of the body can cope with the crisis, then things should go fairly well. If not, however, the character may be in serious danger.

Consider the case of Juno Andropopolus, a thief from Hazlan whose mind has been splintered. While hiding from the local watch, he sees two constables drawing nearer. The Dungeon Master calls for a madness check as the tension mounts, and Juno fails, randomly switching personalities. Instead of a masterful thief, Juno's player is now running Aurora, a four-year-old girl. Seeing that "those bad men" are about to find her, she bolts from her hiding place and tries to run away. Aurora has neither Juno's ability to hide in shadows or move silently, so she is almost certain to be caught.

In cases of prolonged stress, the character is entitled to make another madness check every hour. Success indicates that the core personality gains control of the body, but failure results in another random personality shift.

In addition to mounting stress, any sudden shock can require a madness check to avoid changing personalities. Whenever the hero is called upon to make a fear or horror check, attempt a saving throw, or enter combat, he should first make a madness check.

Defining the Personalities: In order to establish the details of the character's many fragments and alters, the Dungeon Master should roll on the following charts. For fragments, the information presented below is more than sufficient. It is recommended, however, that a separate character sheet (though possibly an abbreviated one) be created for each alter.

Age and Sex - While the alters and fragments generally recognize the age and sex of the body, they do not see this as having any importance to their own characteristics. A male personality living in a female body will usually try to cover up for his embarrassing shell by dressing and acting in a masculine fashion. Conversely, a little girl in the body of an aged man might tend to wear pretty colors, jewelry, and carry a doll.

Table 11: Alter Ego Age and Sex (1d12)

1. Male child	7. Male elderly
2. Female child	8. Female elderly
3. Male adolescent	9. Other demihuman[1]
4. Female adolescent	10. Other humanoid[2]
5. Male adult	11. Other race[3]
6. Female adult	12. Totally alien[4]

1 The personality is of another demihuman race. Roll again for age and sex.
2 The personality is of a humanoid (but not demihuman) race, such as goblin, ogre, rakasta, or gnoll. Roll again for age and sex.
3 The personality is of an inhuman, but not truly monstrous race, such as griffin, harpy, or saurian. Roll again for age and sex.
4 The personality is of a race that is far from human in every way, such as beholder, cloaker, treant, or dragon. Roll again for age and sex.

Demeanor - Just as the personalities do not always correspond with the physical body, neither are they bound by the nature and demeanor of the original personality. While they retain the same alignment as the original personality, their reactions to any given situation are based on their own values and beliefs.

In order to determine the demeanor of each personality, the player should roll 1d100 twice on Table 12. The first roll indicates the major facet of the alter's personality while the second provides a moderating or additional aspect.

For example, a roll of 06 and 56 would indicate a personality who is haughty, though also honest. While others might see such a person as a snobbish braggart, the truth would be that he is very proud of his accomplishments, tending to look down upon those who have not done as much with their lives as he has.

Table 12: Alter Ego Personality Traits

1d100 Roll	Personality Trait	1d100 Roll	Personality Trait
01	Garrulous	26	Inquisitive
02	Hot-tempered	27	Prying
03	Overbearing	28	Intellectual
04	Articulate	29	Perceptive
05	Antagonistic	30	Keen
06	Haughty	31	Perfectionist
07	Elitist	32	Stern
08	Proud	33	Harsh
09	Rude	34	Punctual
10	Aloof	35	Driven
11	Mischievous	36	Trusting
12	Impulsive	37	Kind-hearted
13	Lusty	38	Forgiving
14	Irreverent	39	Easy-going
15	Madcap	40	Compassionate
16	Thoughtless	41	Miserly
17	Absent-minded	42	Hard-hearted
18	Dreamy	43	Covetous
19	Foolish	44	Avaricious
20	Insensitive	45	Thrifty
21	Brave	46	Wastrel
22	Craven	47	Spendthrift
23	Shy	48	Extravagant
24	Fearless	49	Kind
25	Obsequious	50	Charitable

1d100 Roll	Personality Trait	1d100 Roll	Personality Trait
51	Gloomy	76	Laconic
52	Morose	77	Soft-spoken
53	Compulsive	78	Secretive
54	Irritable	79	Retiring
55	Vengeful	80	Mousy
56	Honest	81	Practical
57	Truthful	82	Level-headed

58	Innocent	83	Dull
59	Gullible	84	Reverent
60	Defensive	85	Ponderous
61	Bigoted	86	Scheming
62	Biased	87	Paranoid
63	Narrow-minded	86	Cautious
64	Blustering	89	Deceitful
65	Hide-bound	90	Nervous
66	Cheerful	91	Uncultured
67	Happy	92	Boorish
68	Diplomatic	93	Barbaric
69	Pleasant	94	Graceless
70	Foolhardy	95	Crude
71	Fatalistic	96	Cruel
72	Depressing	97	Sadistic
73	Cynical	98	Immoral
74	Sarcastic	99	Jealous
75	Realistic	00	Warlike

History - Each alter has a distinct history and background from which his personality is drawn. For the purposes of play, this is one of the major points that separates fragments from true alters, for the former have only vague and ill-defined pasts (if they have any at all).

Table 13 can generate major events from a character's background. As with the previous table, the Dungeon Master should roll twice. The first roll indicates the major aspect around which the personality is based, and the second is a moderation factor.

For example, a roll of 20 and 13 might indicate a personality who believes himself to be a wealthy prince who fled from his homeland in order to escape his corrupt parents.

Of course, the entries on this chart are intentionally vague so they can be interpreted many ways. Before deciding exactly what the results indicate, the Dungeon Master and player should consider both the character's alignment and personality.

Table 13: Alter Ego Background (1d20)

01	Rightly accused of a crime
02	Wrongly accused of a crime
03	Enslaved, but set free for some reason
04	Enslaved, but escaped (may fear recapture)
05	Exiled from homeland
06	Had star-crossed love affair
07	Only survivor of terrible disaster
08	Victim of violent crime
09	Hunted by assassins
10	Acquired tremendous wealth

11 Has a powerful enemy
12 Orphaned
13 Ran away from home
14 Cursed by hags, gypsies, or such
15 Wanderlust
16 Witnessed a heinous crime
17 Has secret knowledge
18 Was once another alignment
19 Abandoned by family
20 Member of the nobility or aristocracy

Character Class - It is quite possible that an alter sees himself as a different character class than the original personality. The following chart can determine the alter's class. The player should roll once for the alter's class and once for a possible kit. If the kit rolled is forbidden to the alter's class, then the player should ignore it. If the table requires additional rolls, duplicate rolls and further "roll twice" or "roll thrice" results are ignored.

Table 14: Alter Ego Character Classes (1d20)

ld20 Roll	Character Class	Character Kit
01	Fighter	Acrobat
02	Ranger	Assassin
03	Avenger	Barbarian
04	Paladin	Beggar
05	Mage	Cavalier
06	Specialist	Explorer
07	Arcanist	Gladiator
08	Elementalist	Mariner
09	Priest (any deity)	Merchant
10	Cleric	Mystic
11	Druid	Noble
12	Gypsy	Outlaw
13	Bard	Pirate
14	Fighter	Savage
15	Mage	Scholar
16	Cleric	Scout
17	Thief	Scout
18	Roll twice	Spy
19	Roll twice	Swashbuckler
20	Roll twice	Thug

The kits in the second column of the chart are described in PLAYER'S OPTION: Skills&Powers. If this book is not being used in the campaign, the player can either ignore these entries or simply take them as role-playing suggestions.

The normal restrictions for dual and multi-class characters do not apply to alternate personalities. It is quite possible for an alter to be a paladin/ranger/thief. The important element is simply the player's ability to come up with a background story to explain away any seeming contradictions. Also, racial restrictions do not apply to an alter's class.

Importantly, the alter does not gain all the abilities of his "class". An alter who fancies himself a wizard has no

spellcasting abilities unless the original character did. However, an alter does take on some of the traits of his chosen class. For instance, if the character is called upon to make an attack roll or saving throw, he uses the table indicated by the controlling personality's class (at the same level as the core personality). The same is true of fear, horror, and madness checks. Other abilities may or may not apply to the alter, depending on the situation and the decision of the Dungeon Master. While a wizard with a priest alter could certainly not turn undead, he might very well be proficient with the use of a mace or war hammer.

Final Comments: Players and Dungeon Masters should be aware that these tables reflect how the alter or fragment sees himself. Most of the personalities feel only a limited association with the physical shell which houses them. In a way, they look upon the body in the same way that most people view their homes.

While the emergence of a personality involves no sudden physical transformation, each one has its own mannerisms, handwriting, sense of values, and so on. Alters also tend to have distinctive traits such as stutters, favorite phrases, and unusual clothes. Even the character's voice changes with each personality, making it possible for those who know the hero well to distinguish between the various alters.

System Shock

Sometimes madness can take the ultimate toll on an adventurer. When a character rolls this result, he must attempt an immediate system shock survival roll with a -25% penalty.

A failed roll indicates that the character simply falls dead. Attempts to revive him fail, although magical means might save him.

A successful roll indicates that the character has a chance to survive. His Constitution is instantly reduced by one point to reflect the strain on his health, and he falls to 0 hit points. If the character does not receive immediate aid, he will lose 1 hit point per round, dying when his hit point total reaches -10 as described in Chapter 9 of the DUNGEON MASTER Guide.

In either case, any items carried by the character are dropped. A saving throw vs. fall for each item can determine whether or not they sustain damage.

A character who suffers this effect is so startled that he jumps back in fear and drops anything he was holding, including weapons. A saving throw vs. fall must be attempted for each dropped item (see Chapter 6 of the Dungeon Master Guide).

Recovering from Madness

The following methods can help a character recover from a failed madness check. In the case of amnesia, curing the madness will restore both experience points and levels.

Psionics

The most obvious route to recovery is having a psionicist use the psychic surgery science. If successful, the psionicist cures the character's insanity at once. This practice is a bit dangerous, however, since a psionicist who makes contact with an insane mind must himself make a madness check. Only after a successful check can the psionicist attempt to cure the lunatic.

Magic

Truthfully, wizard magic can do very little to cure insanity. It seems that wizards have had little interest in the ailments of the mind. Exactly why is unclear, but they may have shunned the field merely because it clearly, in their opinion, fell into the realm of psionics.

However, two priest spells can cure mental illness: *heal* and *restoration*. In the case of the former, the mere casting of this spell cures madness. Alternatively, the *restoration* spell must be cast with the specific intent of restoring the character's mind. As stated before, *restoration* cannot restore lost memories.

Hypnosis

Hypnosis is a long, mundane road to recovery for characters who do not have either of the above options available to them. The character must be placed in the continued care of someone capable of performing or casting hypnosis.

Once each week, the patient must be hypnotized so that the therapist can spend an hour working with the now-pliant mind. At the end of the hour, the patient must make another madness check. The following modifiers apply to this roll:

Table 15: Madness Recovery Adjustments

Modifier	Condition
+2	The therapist is able to sense the subject's emotions through magical or psionic means.
+1	The therapy takes place in a location where the patient feels safe and relaxed.
+1	The therapist is of the same alignment as the patient (prior to the onset of madness).
+1	The therapist is of the same class as the patient (prior to the onset of madness).

If the check succeeds, the therapy session has been productive. To be cured, the patient needs as many successful sessions as he has points of Intelligence. If the character fails a madness check during treatment, all previously successful checks are eliminated, and the process must begin again.

Sanitariums

A few sanitariums are scattered across the domains of Ravenloft, although these are restricted to the most culturally developed realms. After all, only the most sophisticated medieval cultures recognize that madness is an ailment which can be treated and cured.

The most prominent facilities are located in the domains of Dementlieu, Richemulot, and Mordent. Of course, Dr. Dominiani has an asylum in Dominia, but his treatments are a bit radical, to say the least. Most sanitariums are devoted to curing insanity. They can show visitors room after room of demented people, driven mad by a variety of experiences in the Demiplane of Dread. The doctors claim to be trained in dealing with such patients through hypnosis and other methods. In truth, however, the quality of treatment varies from sanitarium to sanitarium. To determine the level of care a patient receives, the Dungeon Master should roll 1d8-5, providing a modifier from a -4 penalty to a +3 bonus. This adjustment applies (in addition to any others) to the madness check made for any therapy that the character receives in the sanitarium. In the event of a major change at the facility (like the appointment of a new director), the modifier should be rolled anew.

Almost all sanitariums charge for their services. Typical fees to treat a patient average about one hundred gold pieces a month. Any month that the sanitarium is not paid, the patient receives no treatment. If no payment is made for two consecutive months, the character is simply discharged and left to fend for himself.

Role-Playing the Madness Check

While it is possible for a player to avoid having his character make a fear or horror check by behaving in an appropriate fashion, this is not the case with madness checks. Even the most advanced and talented role-player would have difficulty in portraying the great range of emotions and changes that an insane character undergoes.

For this reason, it is recommended that Dungeon Masters use the game mechanics provided for madness checks and their effects. This is not to say that players should not be encouraged (or even required) to role-play as much of their character's madness as possible, only that the game system is really indispensable in such situations.

Chapter Seven

Power Checks

Mina Murray's Journal, 17 August –

I do not understand Lucy's fading away as she is doing. She eats well and sleeps well, and enjoys the fresh air; but all the time the roses in her cheeks are fading, and she gets weaker and more languid day by day; at night I hear her gasping for air. I keep the key of our door always fastened to my wrist at night, but she gets up and walks about the room, and sits at the open window. Last night I found her leaning out when I woke up, and when I tried to wake her I could not; she was in a faint. When I managed to restore her she was as weak as water, and cried silently between long, painful struggles for breath. When I asked her how she came to be as the window she shook her head and turned away. I trust here feeling ill may not be from that ulucky prick of the safety-pin. I looked at her throat just now as she lay asleep, and the tiny wounds seem not to have healed. They are still open, and, if anything, larger than before, and the edges of them are faintly white. They are like little white dots with red centres. Unless they heal within a day or two, I shall insist on the doctor seeing about them.


– Bram Stocker
Drakula

The greatest danger to those who battle the horrors of Ravenloft is not death, but the seductive, corrupting force of evil. Indeed, most adventurers pray for a chance to lie peacefully in a consecrated grave. It is all too easy for even the most noble and valiant of heroes to gradually become that which he has devoted his life to destroying.

What is a Power Check?

In most cases, players run their characters in the heroic fashion expected of them. From time to time, however, a player opts to have his character undertake an action of questionable morality. In most game worlds, he could get away with such things provided he did not perform an action so heinous as to require an alignment change. On the Demiplane of Dread, things are not so simple.

The dark powers keep a constant vigil over the actions of every living thing in Ravenloft. Whenever someone commits an evil deed, the shadowy gaze of the dark powers could possibly fall upon the wrong-doer. In order to determine whether or not a given act draws the attention of the dark powers, the Dungeon Master makes use of a game mechanic called a powers check.

A powers check is, quite simply, a means of prodding the player characters away from acts of evil. If the players follow the course of heroes and champions, they will never have to attempt a powers check; the less pure of heart, who often tread the gray edges of the Abyss, will make them constantly.

While the chance of failing a given powers check is generally slight, those who must make them repeatedly will surely fail sooner or later. When that happens, they begin to sink into a quicksand of evil, and only the greatest of heroes ever saves himself from that mire.

When to Make a Power Check?

Whenever a character undertakes an action that might be considered evil, the Dungeon Master should require a powers check. Exactly what sorts of actions require powers checks, however, can be the subject of some debate.

As a rule, a Dungeon Master should require a powers check only when a character commits a premeditated act of evil. If the character suffers from some form of mental domination, no check is required. If the act is a necessity forced on the character by his situation, no check is required. A Dungeon *Master must decide on a case by case basis whether or not an act requires a powers check.

How to Make a Power Check?

A powers check is nothing more than a percentile roll. When the Dungeon Master decides to require a check, he assigns a chance of failure and then rolls 1d1OO. If the roll is above the chance of failure, the attention of the dark powers was focused elsewhere, and the character does not come to their attention.

If the roll is equal to or less than the chance of failure, however, the character draws the attention of the mysterious masters of Ravenloft. In recognition of the character's misdeeds, they grant him a new special ability - but not without a price. In addition to this new ability, the character will be burdened with some manner of disadvantage or weakness.

Determining the Chance of Failure

Once the Dungeon Master decides that an act requires a powers check, he must assign a chance of failure. Evil acts range from petty crimes to unspeakable deeds of debauchery, and the nature of the action should mandate the severity of the check.

Table 16: Recommended Powers Checks indicates the chance of failure associated with some common evil acts. A particularly vile example of these deeds should have its chance of failure increased by half. If mitigating circumstances played a part in the character's decision to do evil, the chance of failure may be reduced. In all cases, of course, the Dungeon Master has the final say.

Table 16: Recommended Powers Checks

Crimes or Acts of Violence	**Evil NPCs or Monsters**	**Neutral NPCs or Strangers**	**Good NPCs or Friends**	**PCs, Family, or Innocents**	
Assault, Unprovoked	-	1%	2%	3%	
Assault, Grievous	1%	2%	4%	6%	
Betrayal, Major	i%	3%	6%	9%	
Betrayal, Minor	-	1%	3%	6%	
Extortion	-	2%	5%	8%	
Lying	-	-	-	1%	
Murder, Brutal	3%	6%	10%	+	
Murder, Premeditated or Nonbrutal	2%	3%	6%	10%	
Theft, Grave Robbing	-	1%	5%	7%	
Theft, Major	-	1%	4%	7%	
Theft, Minor	-	-	3%	6%	
Threats of Violence	-	-	1%	2%	
Torture, Routine	4%	7%	+	+	
Torture, Sadistic	10%	+	+	+	
Unholy Acts	**Evil Faith**	**Neutral Faith**	**Good Faith**	**Own Faith**	
Breaking a Tenet	-	1%	2%	5%	
Breaking an Oath	-	2%	5%	10%	
Breaking a Vow	-	5%	10%	+	
Defilement	-	4%	8%	+	
Desecration	-	8%	+	+	
Laying a Curse	**Embarrassing**	**Frustrating**	**Troublesome**	**Dangerous**	**Lethal**
Highly Justified	-	1%	2%	4%	8%
Justified	1%	2%	4%	8%	16%
Unjustified	2%	4%	8%	16%	32%
Other Evil Acts					

Casting an Evil Spell (Nonnecromatic)	1% chance per level of the spell (halved If for good intentions)
Casting an Evil Spell (Necrornantic)	2% chance per level of the spell (halved if for good intentions)
Using an Evil Psionic Science	5%
Using an Evil Psionic Devotion	3%

- No powers Check is required for such an action.
+ These acts almost certainly draw the attention of the dark powers. See "Acts of Ultimate Darkness" later in this chapter.

Crimes or Acts of Violence

In some cases, these are the least risky of evil deeds. While the dark powers may occasionally take notice of a thief cutting the strings on a purse, they are generally uninterested in such matters. Usually, only those violent acts of a particularly cruel or brutal nature attract the attention of the dark powers.

Assault, Unprovoked: Unprovoked assaults are those in which the perpetrator has no actual intent to murder or cause lasting harm to the victim. Such actions are often unwarranted manifestations of malice, spite, or bigotry. Violent crimes like muggings fall into this category.

Assault, Grievous: A grievous assault is one in which lasting damage is inflicted on the victim. In general, the assailant employs a deadly weapon and cares little for the survival of his victim. A particularly barbaric unarmed beating can also fall into this category, however. Exceptionally violent crimes like attempted murder fall under this heading.

Betrayal, Major: Few acts are as difficult to define as betrayal. As a rule, however, betrayal can be defined, as the breaking of a trust or promise. This should not be confused with violations of holy oaths or tenets, which are described below. Actions that violate the spirit of a promise, even if they adhere to the letter of it, still count as betrayals. In order to qualify as a major betrayal, the act must lead to the long-lasting harm or death of the victim.

Betrayal, Minor: A minor act of betrayal causes the victim to be publicly humiliated or forces a change in his lifestyle. Exposing an embarrassing secret entrusted to you by a close friend or lover qualifies as a minor betrayal.

Extortion: This category covers many criminal areas, including blackmail and armed robbery, in which the perpetrator uses the threat of violence to deprive someone of something which is rightfully his. It also includes forcing someone to commit evil acts, violate a law, or otherwise undertake an undesirable action.

Lying: The dark powers are said to hear every word spoken in the Demiplane of Dread. A whispered untruth, whether in the middle of a public market or in the darkness of a hidden lair, can potentially draw their attention. The act of lying includes both the telling of untruths and the omission of facts, but unless the lie has a directly negative effect on the hearer, no powers check is required.

Murder, Brutal: To define any murder as less than brutal is obviously inappropriate. In game terms, however, this category includes all acts of homicide in which the victim is made to suffer for an extended period of time. For example, beheading someone would not fall into this category, but strapping them down beneath a slowly descending, razoredged pendulum would. Especially brutal murders may well fall under the heading of torture, which is described below.

Murder, Premeditated or Nonbrutal: This category encompasses both nonbrutal (as defined above) and premeditated murders. Premeditated murder includes any act of homicide which is committed in the name of personal gain or vengeance.

Theft, Grave Robbing: Grave robbery is one of the most universally despised acts that any human being can undertake. This includes everything from the violation of ancient tombs for scientific inquiry to the exhuming of a corpse for the construction of a golem or zombie. Pilfering the belongings of fallen companions is also deemed to be an act of grave robbing. In places like Har'Akir, where the natives especially revere the tombs of the dead, grave robbing might even count as the desecration of a holy place (as described in the "Unholy Acts" section below).

Theft, Major: The distinction between major and minor theft is not based upon the value of the stolen items, but on its effect on the victim. Stealing a purse of gold from a wealthy noble will do little more than anger him and, thus, should be considered minor theft. Alternatively, stealing a few silvers from a poor family could cause them to go hungry and should be considered major theft.

Theft, Minor: Any theft that does not fall into the previous category counts as minor theft.

Threats of Violence: Unless it becomes habitual, this offense seldom draws the attention of the dark powers. Threats fall into this category only if they greatly intimidate the victim and if the offender has both the means and intent to follow through on his words.

Torture, Routine: Anyone who engages in torture is certain to run afoul of the dark powers in short order. Even when used to gain information that might result in an ultimate good, the use of torture is an evil act. Even torture done out of necessity falls under this heading.

Torture, Sadistic: Those who regularly engage in torture for sheer enjoyment number among the most vile and heinous creatures in Ravenloft. Such folk are certain to be consumed by the evil within them.

Unholy Acts

Violating a religious code can often attract the attention of the dark powers. This is especially important if a paladin or priest undertakes the evil act.

Unholy acts should require a powers check only if the offender is aware of his transgression. A character who enters a temple and fails to make a holy sign of respect because he does not know about the custom has committed no wrong. If the character still refuses after being informed of the practice, he runs the risk of offending the powers.

Unholy acts depend on both the personal beliefs of the character and the beliefs of those around him. A character is expected to consistently uphold his own personal beliefs. For instance, a worshiper of Thor must always follow the teachings of his church, and if he fails to do so, his transgression may be noticed by the dark powers. Alternatively, a character can also commit an unholy act by openly and maliciously violating the beliefs of those around him. A character who mocks an important idol may well offend more than the local townspeople.

Breaking a Tenet: Every religion has a number of rules that its members must follow. For example, worshipers of a sea god might be expected to eat fish or seafood at least once a day. Anyone who knowingly violates one of these practices is guilty of breaking a tenet.

Breaking an Oath: Deities often require their followers, especially members of the clergy, to make promises of loyalty and obedience. For example, priests who worship a god of peace might swear an oath of pacifism forbidding them to ever strike another in anger. If such a character is goaded into throwing a punch, he violates this holy oath. Even if the act was prompted by a desire for self preservation or in defense of a helpless innocent, it still requires the character to make a powers check.

Breaking a Vow: Usually, only members of the clergy take holy vows. The violation of such a vow often carries penalties

even beyond the powers check. For the purposes of powers checks, holy vows are lifelong commitments designed to show the devotion of a priest to his deity. A priest who breaks a vow betrays both his church and his deity.

Defilement: A character commits an act of defilement when he causes a sacred object, place, or person to lose its blessing. Pouring lamp oil into a font of holy water, thereby spoiling the holy water, counts as an act of defilement. By the same token, opening a tomb in the domain of Har'Akir also counts as defilement, because of the special reverence that the natives grant to the dead.

Desecration: In many ways, desecration resembles defilement in that it robs a holy place or item of its sacred stature. Desecration, however, actually makes the object offensive to the deity who blessed it.

Laying a Curse

Whenever a character calls upon the dark powers to curse another, whether his actions are justified or not, he must make a powers check. The chance of failing such a check depends upon the final effect of the curse, as indicated on the chart. While all curses have the potential for drawing the attention of the dark powers, those laid without cause are twice as dangerous.

A complete discussion of curses is presented in Chapter Twelve: The Whispered Evil.

Other Evil Acts

Two other commonly attempted acts can mandate powers checks as well.

Casting an Evil Spell: Most spells do not require a powers check. Some, however, tap into sources of mystical power best left untouched. Spells that require the player to make a powers check are noted in Chapters Eight and Nine. In rare cases, the Dungeon Master might feel that an evil spell is being used with exceptionally altruistic motives. If so, he may opt to halve the chance of failure on this powers check.

Using Evil Psionic Powers: When a character uses the powers of the mind in the service of evil, he runs the risk of having the dark powers overhear his thoughts.

Special Considerations

While the above guidelines allow the Dungeon Master to handle almost any situation involving powers checks, a few additional factors should be considered.

Acts of Ultimate Darkness

Some deeds are so evil that a normal powers check just is not appropriate. These acts of ultimate darkness are so terrible that they almost certainly draw the attention of the dark powers.

Exactly what qualifies as an act of ultimate darkness is left up to the Dungeon Master. Certainly, the betrayal and murder of Sergei von Zarovich by his brother Strahd falls into this category. Even if not committed for so unsavory a goal as the possession of Sergei's betrothed, the act alone reeks of evil. The fact that his actions drove an innocent woman to suicide and resulted in the death of countless others only magnifies the atrocity. It is no wonder that this is the first recorded act to draw the attention of the dark powers.

When a player commits an act of ultimate darkness, the Dungeon Master is free to assign any chance of failure. As a rule,

the minimum value selected for such a check should be 50%. In extreme cases, the Dungeon Master might even mandate a 100% chance of failure.

Multiple Evil Deeds

Occasionally, a character will undertake an act that seems to require more than one powers check (like using a *chill touch* spell to murder an innocent person); both the casting of this evil spell and the act of murder require powers checks. Still, the character should make only a single powers check when this happens. The chance of failing such a check equals the total of all the lesser checks. In the example above, the powers check would have a chance of failure equal to 10% (for the premeditated murder of an innocent) plus 2% (for the use of a 1st-level necromancy spell) for a total of 12%.

Role-Playing a Power Check

RAVENLOFT campaigns should include horror, romance, drama, adventure, and tragedy. This game should not resemble a board game, with rules and tables resolving every action. Game mechanics should always yield to role-playing.

Obviously, a powers check is a game mechanic. When a character commits an evil act, die rolls determine whether or not a sinister fate befalls him. A good Dungeon Master, however, will not allow the powers check to interfere with role-playing. Instead, it can be used to promote the macabre atmosphere of the game.

Consider the following example: Byron de la Sol, a young rogue, hijacks a shipment of medicine destined for a city ravaged by the plague. This act will cause dozens in the city to die. De la Sol is well aware of this fact, but he values his own coffers over the health of the innocents in the city. The Dungeon Master decides that a powers check is clearly in order. However, rather than simply instructing the player to roll some dice, he narrates the macabre feelings assumed to be associated with a powers check:



> *As you transfer the vials of healing tincture to your pouch, a shiver runs down your spine. For the briefest fraction of a second, you are certain that someone is looking over your shoulder. Indeed, you can even feel wisps of icy cold breath on the back of your neck.*

When the player announces that his character whirls around with a knife in hand, he sees nothing. This is an ideal time for the Dungeon Master to have the player roll percentile dice, without giving any explanation. If the player succeeds at the check, his momentary brush with the dark powers comes to an end. Another brief narrative is then in order:

> *As quickly as it came upon you, the uncomfortable feeling passes. You see no evidence to Indicate that anything the least bit unusual has happened. Most likely, the whole encounter merely sprang from your over-active imagination.*

Should the character fail his powers check, the Dungeon Master might employ the following narrative to convey the experience:

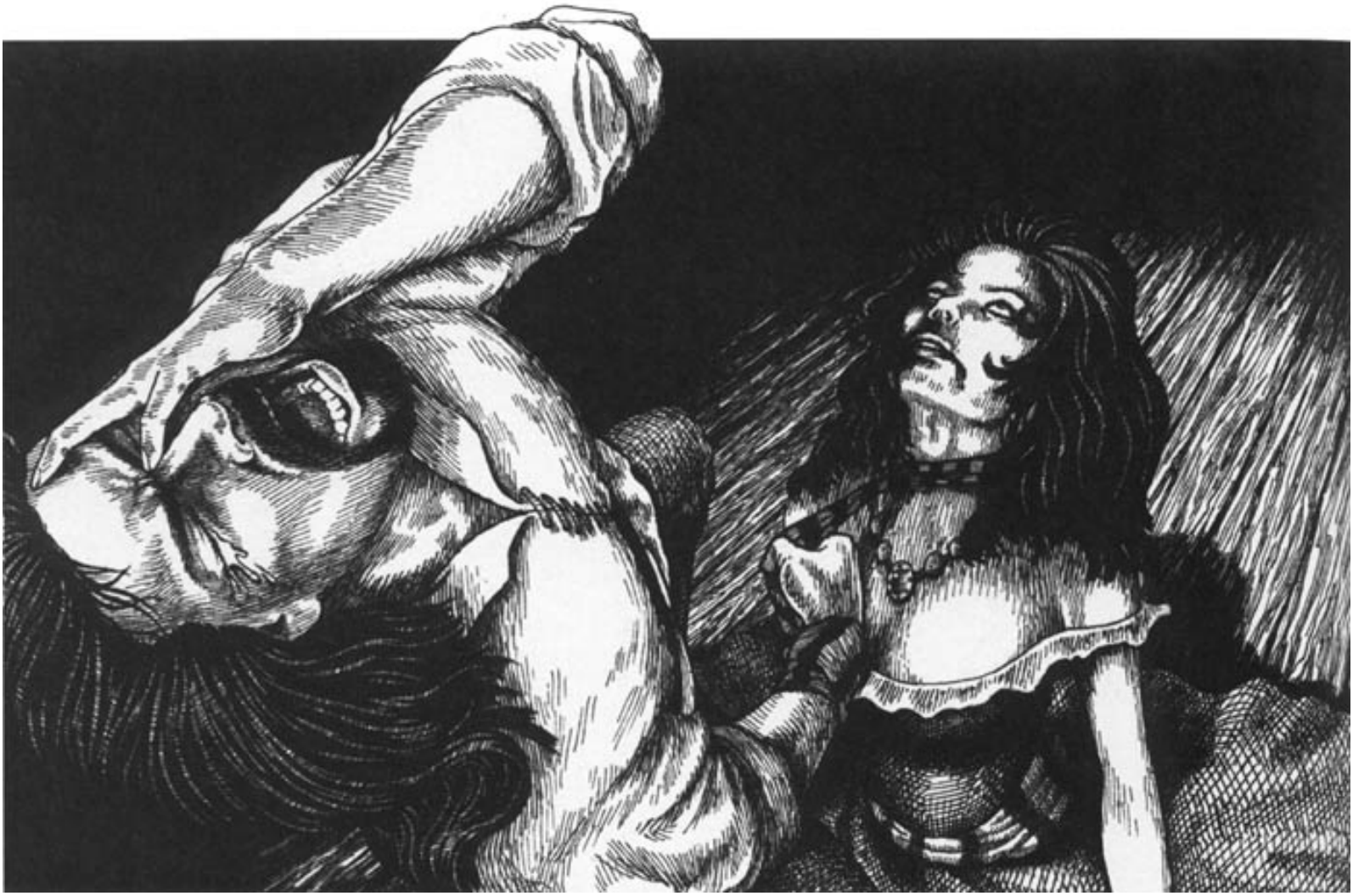
> *A sudden chill wind blows through the room, snuffing the light of your lantern. In the wake of this sudden gust, as the acrid smell of the still smoldering wick twists around you, it becomes clear that something is amiss. The room, which should now be all but pitch black, seems brightly illuminated. After a moment of surprise, you become aware that you can now see as clearly in the dark as by the light of the noonday sun.*

Of course, what the Dungeon Master has not told the player is that his character will now find normal daylight to be painfully bright. This fact will almost certainly lessen the glee that his new power has brought to him.

Clearly, role-playing the powers check is far more effective than simply asking the player to make a powers check and then telling him the result of the failure in strict game terms.

The Effects of Failure

Failing a powers check taints a character's spirit with evil. At this point, a gradual process of decay begins, and, if allowed to go unchecked, it results in the ultimate corruption of the character. The following steps apply to characters whose descent takes place completely within the confines of the Demiplane of Dread. Thus, many evil beings may enter the process at a higher level due to their past actions, without actually experiencing the changes associated with the lower levels. For example, Strahd's evil actions earned him the position of darklord, though he never experienced the intervening steps.



The Road to Destruction

Many different paths lead to the ultimate destruction that results from an evil life. Although the final effect of each is the same, the road traveled varies from despicable to tragic.

Seduction

By far the most tragic route to darkness is the way by which an innocent person is lured into committing increasingly evil acts. With each new crime, he drifts further and further from possible redemption.

It is worth noting that the mysterious dark powers never engage in this practice. Whatever they might be, they do not lead the innocent astray. No person comes to the attention of the dark powers unless he willingly commits an act of evil.

Preying

This fall from grace is all the more lamentable because the victims commit no wrong. These characters have been attacked by some creature able to sap life force, convey the dread disease of lycanthropy, or otherwise transform its victims into a copy of itself. Many vampires, lycanthropes, ghouls, and spirits can force people down the path of darkness in this way.

Curses

Curses and magical afflictions can sometimes drag characters into the darkness of absolute corruption. In most cases, a character receives a curse in response to evil acts he has perpetrated on another. Some extremely powerful curses can even transform victims into lycanthropes or undead creatures. Additional information about curses and their effects can be found in Chapter Twelve: The Whispered Evil.

Dark Pacts

From time to time, a dark and terrible creature will respond to the entreaties of a lesser being, but the price for its services almost always leaves a mark on the petitioner's spirit. Even those who request a beneficial or charitable service soon discover some horrible twist mingled in with it. The most famous example of this type of corruption can be found in the case of Strahd von Zarovich, darklord of Barovia, although exactly who he struck his deal with has never been determined.

Malevolence

This most common route to darkness and corruption has brought most of Ravenloft's domain lords into the eager embrace of the Mists. Those who fall into this category seldom feel any remorse for their heinous acts. Whether their actions are dictated by cold, calculating logic or spawned in the wild frenzy of passion makes no difference.

Descent Into Darkness

It is said that no man is born into evil. Each person must make his own way in the world and choose for himself between the path of light and the path of darkness. The Mists of Ravenloft welcome evildoers, but theirs is a cold and deadly embrace.

The Thirteen Steps

A traditional gallows has thirteen steps leading from the firm soil of life to the gaping maw of death. The same number of strides will carry one from the ranks of the pure and wholesome to the gruesome cadre of the damned. **Table 17: Steps of Corruption** indicates the thirteen stages that the unwary can pass through.

Table 17: Steps of Corruption

Step	Failed Checks	Level of Corruption	Minor Changes	Moderate Changes	Major Changes
I	0	Pure	-	-	-
II	0	Clean	-	-	-

III	0	Redeemed	-	-	-
IV	1	Unclean	1	-	-
V	2	Corrupted	2	-	-
VI	3	Accursed	3	-	-
VII	4	Beast	3	1	-
VIII	5	Creature	3	2	-
IX	6	Monster	3	3	-
X	7	Demilord	3	3	1
XI	8	Lord	3	3	2
XII	9	Overlord	3	3	3
XIII	10	Darklord	3	3	4

Pure: In order to be considered pure, a character must have never been called upon to even attempt a powers check. As soon as a character has to do so (even if he does not fail the check), he loses this purity. Very few people actually fall under this category. While all are born into this group, few possess the moral stamina to resist all the lures of evil.

A protection from good or similar spell can repel a pure character. Evil priests can even attempt to turn them as if they were paladins.

Clean: Characters, both player and nonplayer, who have attempted but never failed a powers check, fall into this category. Most people fit into this group.

All characters brought into Ravenloft from other campaigns are considered clean unless the Dungeon Master has some special reason to class them otherwise. The exceptions to this rule are paladins (classified as pure) and those of evil alignment (classified as unclean).

Redeemed: One can turn away from the twisting path of evil even after traveling upon it. However, few are strong enough to withstand the seductive force of evil.

Redeemed characters have failed powers checks in the past and been touched by the dark powers, but they have torn themselves away from the wicked embrace of evil and managed to regain a state of grace. While they can never again be pure or clean, they have saved themselves (at least for now) from the perils of eternal torment at the hands of the dark powers. The "Redemption" section below presents rules for the redemption of evil characters.

Unclean: When one first begins taking steps down the road to corruption and ultimate darkness, salvation is still in sight. During this stage, a person is deemed to be unclean, for though they have strayed from the path of good, they have not yet traveled too far down the trail of disaster.

An unclean character has failed one powers check. His soul bears the mark of darkness like the kiss of a hot branding iron. He has received some singular gift (a minor change, as described below in the "Changes" section) from the dark powers. At the same time, however, his evil has brought him a curse. Usually, no outward change shows in the appearance of an unclean character.

Redeeming oneself at this stage is still not overly difficult. The player retains control of the unclean character, but the Dungeon Master should advise him that his character may become a nonplayer character if he continues to follow the path of darkness.

Corrupted: Upon failing a second powers check, an individual passes from unclean to corrupted. At this point, it becomes apparent that he is either unable or unwilling to seek redemption. Because of this, it is very difficult to return to a state of grace.

A corrupted character usually remains under the control of the player. However, the Dungeon Master should roll percentile dice when the character first falls to this level. If the roll is 5% or below, the character gives himself over to evil and becomes a nonplayer character.

Accursed: If a corrupted individual continues in his vile actions, he passes from corrupted to accursed. At this point, redemption is almost impossible; even powerful magic and priestly intervention can do little to help.

Accursed player characters stand a fair chance of becoming nonplayer characters. When a character sinks to this level of corruption, the Dungeon Master should roll percentile dice for him. If the result is 25% or below, the character is consumed by darkness and becomes a nonplayer character.

Beast: When a character progresses to this level and undergoes his first moderate change, he can no longer hide his mutations. With great effort, a beastly character might pass for a normal man at a distance, but even the most casual of examinations will reveal that something is amiss.

Upon reaching this level of corruption, the character's alignment shifts to neutral (if it is not already neutral or evil), and all penalties for involuntary alignment changes apply (see the DUNGEON MASTER Guide). Characters who have followed the path of destruction this far are almost never able to redeem themselves.

When a player character reaches this level of corruption, the lord of the domain immediately becomes aware of his presence. Whether he opts to take notice of him or not is up to the Dungeon Master. Also, the Dungeon Master should again roll percentile dice. If the result is 50% or below, the character becomes an evil nonplayer character.

Creature: The changes that overcome a character at this point are truly terrible. Decent people avoid all contact with someone like this.

By the time he has descended to this level of depravity, a character has proven himself to be utterly evil and unworthy of redemption. At this point, the Dungeon Master should again roll percentile dice. Any roll of 75% or below indicates that the character becomes a nonplayer character villain.

Monster: Upon descending to this level of corruption, the character is fully transformed into the creature previously selected for him by the Dungeon Master (see "Changes" below). Any character who becomes a monster is of great interest to the local domain lord, so he almost always contacts the villain somehow. Whether this contact is peaceful or violent, however, depends largely upon the plans and ambitions of the domain lord.

Any character who descends to the level of a monster will almost certainly become a nonplayer character. When the character reaches this level of corruption, the Dungeon Master should roll percentile dice. Any roll of 95% or below removes the character from the control of the player.

Demilord: At this level of corruption, the character must either become a willing servant of a darklord or actually become the lord of a Pocket domain.

A demilord undergoes his first major change, manifesting some outward evidence of his corruption that is all but impossible to conceal. In the wake of this change, he sheds the last of his humanity forever. For that reason, any demilord automatically becomes a nonplayer character. At this point, his alignment shifts to evil (if it is not already), and all penalties for involuntary alignment changes apply (see the DUNGEON MASTER Guide).

Lord: Those who are true masters of evil ascend through the ranks of darkness to become lords of their own Islands of Terror. These vile creatures manifest a second major change, making them even more frightening and powerful than before.

Overlord: Overlords rule sections of Cluster domains. Usually, these Clusters were previously independent Islands of Terror. At this point, the overlord undergoes another major change, making it obvious that he is not a creature to be trifled with.

Darklord: Darklords have achieved the final possible level of corruption, becoming the most powerful of Ravenloft's domain lords. Their powers and intellects set them apart from even the other masters of the Demiplane of Dread's scattered regions of evil. These dangerous and sinister creatures rule their own Core domains.

Changes

As a character sinks through the murky depths of corruption, he becomes more and more affected by the embrace of evil. Simultaneously, both his body and spirit begin to mutate. As indicated on **Table 17**, the three types of changes are minor, moderate, and major.

When a character fails a powers check, the Dungeon Master can elect to merely roll on the appropriate table and enforce the selected change. However, this method does not promote the role-playing so integral to a RAVENLOFT campaign. The first time a character fails a powers check, the Dungeon Master should consider taking a few moments to determine his eventual fate, considering both the act that was committed and the nature of the character. Using that information, he should select a creature into which the character will ultimately evolve if he continues to pursue the rewards of evil.

For example, if a necromancer fails his powers check because of his dark magic, the Dungeon Master might decide to eventually transform him into a lich or nosferatu. Alternatively, he might decide that a thief who dabbles in grave robbing will ultimately become a ghoul. If the player does not change his ways, the Dungeon Master can use the selected creature as a model for the rewards and penalties he hands out with each failed powers check. (See "Terror Tracks" at the end of this chapter.)

Note: Not all characters begin this descent at an equal ability level. Some of the domain lords wield more power simply because they already had special powers and abilities before being transformed.

Minor Changes

Minor changes are not immediately obvious to those who encounter the character. While they can sometimes be detected by a close examination, the corrupted character is generally able to conceal these changes from his companions.

The following chart provides several examples of minor changes. Whenever a character undergoes a minor change, the Dungeon Master can consult the chart, either rolling randomly, selecting an appropriate change, or using these to devise new ones.

Moderate Changes

Moderate changes are more obvious than minor ones. A character must take fairly drastic measures to conceal a moderate change from those around him. In any case, a close examination of the character will reveal that something is clearly amiss.

Major Changes

Major changes are so apparent that it is almost impossible for a character to conceal them.

Table 18: Minor Changes

Roll 1d6	Effect of Change
1	The character develops 1 infravision equal to that of an elf, but he finds the light of day so bright that he suffers a -2 penalty to all saving throws while exposed to it.
2	The character's hands become so strong that his grip can inflict 1d4 points of damage. However, any nonmagical object that he handles must make a successful saving throw vs. crushing blow or be damaged.
3	The character's hearing becomes acute, giving him a +25% chance to hear noise, Loud sounds require him to make a saving throw vs. paralysis or be dazed for 1d4 rounds.
4	The character's Intelligence score increases by two points, but he suffers from constant headaches that impose a -2 penalty on all proficiency checks.
5	The character's skin becomes tougher than usual, giving him a base Armor Class of 8. However, his Dexterity score suffers a -1 penalty as it becomes harder for him to move about.
6	One of the character's physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution) increases by one point. At the same time, however, one of his mental scores (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma) decreases by one point.

Table 19: Moderate Changes

Roll 1d6	Effect of Change
1	The character grows claws, giving him the ability to inflict 1d4 points of damage in unarmed melee combat. These nonretractable claws reduce his Dexterity by two points when he is attempting fine work of any sort.
2	The character grows fangs like those of a viper, and his bite now injects type B poison. At the same time, his tongue becomes forked, so he speaks with an exaggerated hissing lisp, reducing his Charisma score by two points.
3	The character now has excellent night vision and infravision, but his eyes have been transformed to look like those of a cat. His Charisma drops by one point.
4	The character can scale walls as if using the *spider climb* spell, but his hands and feet now have suckers like the tentacles of an octopus, dropping his Charisma by one point.
5	The character's saliva is highly acidic and burns those it touches for 1d4 points of damage. Anything placed in his mouth (like a spoon or the edge of a cup) must make a successful saving throw vs. acid or be damaged.
6	The character's face becomes distorted and grotesque, causing his Charisma to drop by half and forcing all those who look into his eyes to attempt a fear check.

Table 20: Major Changes

Roll 1d6	Effect of Change
1	The character grows reptilian scales, giving him a base Armor Class of 6, while reducing his Dexterity and Charisma by two points each.
2	The character's skin becomes a pale, deathly gray. Sunlight now inflicts him with 1d4 points of damage per round, but he is unaffected by cold- and ice-based attacks.
3	The character becomes a conduit for negative plane energy, enabling him to drain one life-energy level with a successful unarmed melee attack. Lawful good religious objects, including holy water and symbols, now burn him for 2d4 points of damage and force him to attempt a fear check if they touch him.
4	The character sprouts great reptilian wings, which enable him to fly at a rate of 15 with a maneuverability class of C. His bestial nature surfaces, however, reducing his Wisdom and Intelligence scores by two points each.
5	The character grows a scorpionlike tail, ending in a stinger that injects type F poison. Every check he makes to determine the reaction of an nonplayer character to him automatically shifts one step toward hostile.
6	The character becomes a hulking, feral beast. Ail three of his physical ability scores increase by two points, but his mental scores drop by an equal number of points.

Redemption

The longer someone treads the path of darkness, the harder it becomes to return to a state of grace. Still, if someone who was momentarily led or drawn astray acts quickly to change his ways, redemption is possible.

Characters can attempt redemption only so long as they have not undergone a moderate change. As soon as a character fails his fourth powers check, he passes into the darkness, and only the most potent of efforts can save him from final consumption by the dark powers (see "Final Corruption" below).

Repentance

The most common way in which a character can attempt to reverse the effects of a failed powers check is by reliving the events that led him down the dark path. In this case, the character must confront a situation similar to the one that brought about his failed check, but this time, he must chose the correct path. If the Dungeon Master allows it, the character could even undertake an epic quest to right some ancient wrong in order to make amends for his own failings.

A single confrontation is seldom sufficient to cleanse the taint of evil from a character's soul, however. In order to reverse corruption, the character must repeat this process a number of times equal to the percentage chance of the powers check he failed. Once the character accomplishes this, he can attempt a new powers check. The chance of failing that check is the same as that of the previously failed check. If the character succeeds, the effects of his most recent failure are reversed.

Exactly what happens when a character attains redemption is determined by his level of corruption. For an unclean character, the taint of evil is lifted from him, and he becomes redeemed. He no longer has the special power or the curse bestowed upon him by the dark powers.

If the character has progressed beyond the first stage of corruption, his status improves by one level. Thus, if he was classified as corrupt, he becomes unclean. If he wants to further redeem himself, he must begin the process again, working to reverse the failed powers check that caused him to originally become unclean. The ability and curse associated with the most recently failed powers check dissipate.

Atonement

The 5th-level priest spell atonement can be used to reverse a failed powers check caused by an unholy act. However, the spell must be cast by a priest of the offended deity, and convincing such a priest to cast the spell may actually be harder than repentance.

For the spell to help redeem the character, he must make a successful resurrection survival roll when it is cast. Otherwise, the spell has no effect.

If an atonement spell fails to undo the damage done by a failed powers check, subsequent attempts will also have no effect. Only after the character has either failed another powers check or reversed the effects of the most recent check by repentance can another atonement spell aid him.

Final Corruption

In most cases, a character who has only undergone minor changes can still save himself from ultimate collapse, although the feat will require exceptional effort. Once a character has undergone a moderate or major change, however, it is almost impossible to restore him to a state of grace.

Exactly what powers might be invoked to restore a character so far lost is a matter for individual Dungeon Masters to

decide. An exceptionally powerful spell such as a wish might suffice if worded properly and granted by some unusually potent source. In rare cases, the gods might even grant a divine blessing for the character (although it can be debated that it is impossible to obtain such a dispensation while within the Demiplane of Dread).

Of course, even when such powerful methods as these are used, their maximum possible effect is to remove one level of corruption from a character. Thus, restoration of a character who has failed four, five, or six powers checks is an incredibly difficult task.

Terror Tracks

RAVENLOFT games should not center around rules and mechanics. The use of terror tracks can help add mystery and excitement to powers checks.

As stated earlier, the Dungeon Master should consider the nature of a given character and select the type of monster that the character will transform into if he follows an evil course. For example, a forester with a fondness for wolves could gradually become a werewolf, while a necromancer may well be transformed into a vampire. The latter will serve as an example to illustrate the use of terror tracks (see **Table 21: Track of the Vampire**).

Once the Dungeon Master determines the final result of a character's corruption, he should make a list of the powers and weaknesses associated with the selected creature. When this is done, the list should contain ten powers and a like number of disadvantages. Then, the powers and weaknesses should be arranged in order from least important to most important.

Of course, few creatures can be so neatly dissected, so the Dungeon Master may have to add or subtract a few powers or weaknesses in order to bring the total to ten. For example, if the final version of the creature can drain two life energy levels, this might first appear as the ability to drain one energy level and then later as the ability to drain two energy levels. When using the optional terror tracks method, the Dungeon Master need not necessarily worry about the exact definitions of minor, moderate, and major changes.

On the same note, it can be difficult sometimes to decide the order of the rewards and punishments. Once again, the Dungeon Master should not fret too much about this. It is simply a matter of opinion as to whether casting no shadow is worse than being repelled by garlic and mirrors. The overall effect will be achieved admirably as long as the powers and drawbacks are presented in a more-or-less progressive fashion. As the hero becomes more like the monsters he has spent his life hunting, each stage of corruption will just naturally seem worse than the last.

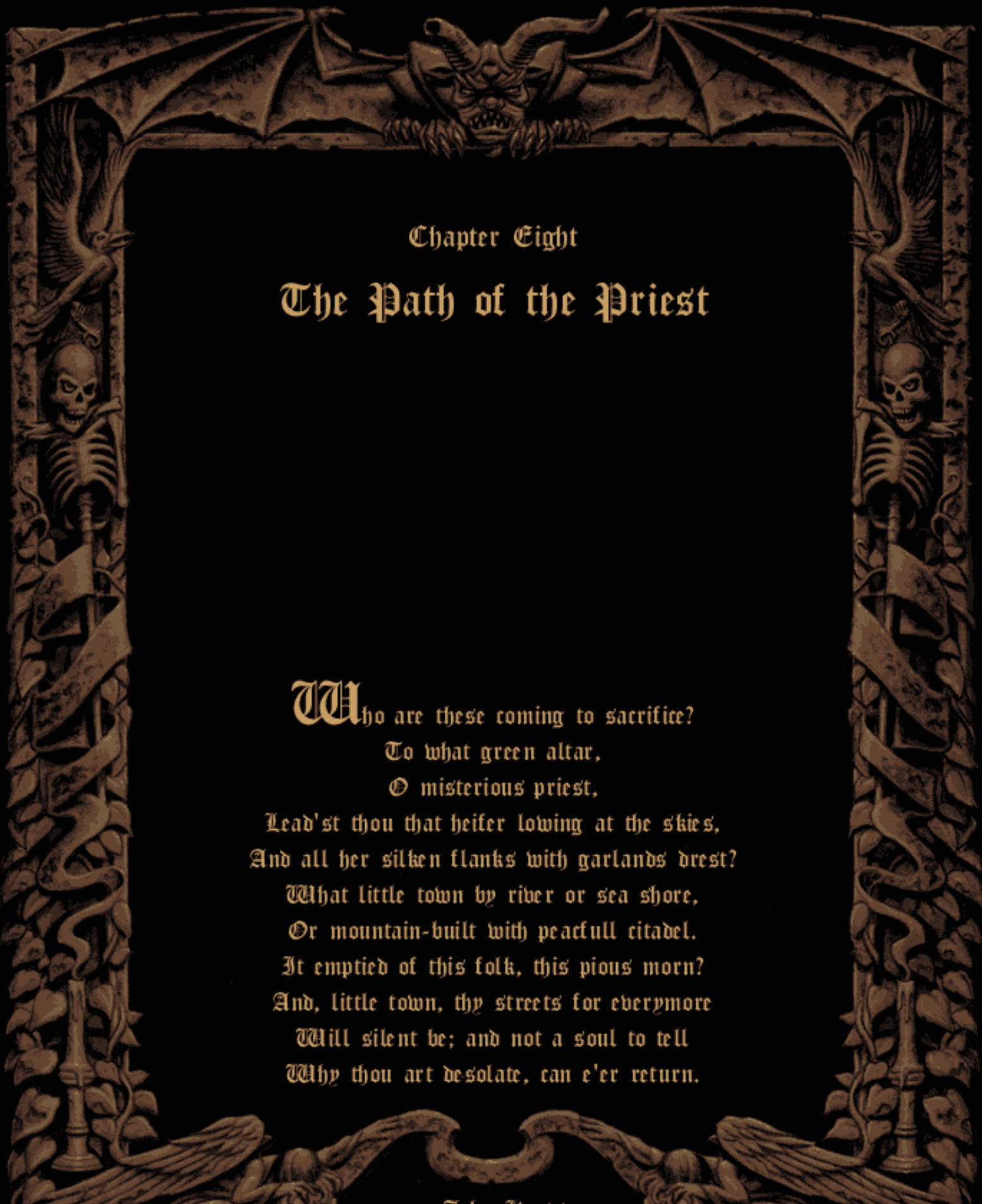
When writing out the track of corruption for a hero, the Dungeon Master should introduce a few changes to the generic monster used as a model. Consider our example of the vampire: If the character undergoing the transformation has a fondness for roses, perhaps they should replace garlic on the list. Similarly, if the hero already has a Strength equal to that of a common vampire, alter his Dexterity or Constitution score.

These ten steps can then be used to assign the rewards and penalties for each failed powers check - all the way up to darklord status. **Table 21** gives an example of what a terror track might look like for someone destined to become a vampire.

Table 21: Track of the Vampire

Stage	Reward and Punishment
I	The character's Strength increases to 18/76, and his features become angular and feral, reducing his Charisma by 1 point.
II	The character gains the ability to spider climb at will. From this point on, he must be invited in order to enter a house.
III	The character can summon wolves or bats at will, but he no longer casts a reflection or shadow.
IV	The character becomes immune to life-affecting and mind-affecting spells, but garlic and mirrors now physically repel him.
V	The character can be hit only by +1 or better magical weapons, but holy symbols now physically repulse him.

VI	The character acquires the charm gaze ability at will, but sunlight now burns him, inflicting 1d4 points of damage each round.
VII	The character gains the ability to take on bat form at will, but holy water and symbols now inflict 2d4 points of damage to him on contact.
VIII	The character gains the ability to take on gaseous form, but he can now be turned as a vampire.
IX	The character gains the ability to regenerate 3 hit points per round, but sunlight can irrevocably destroy him in one round.
X	The character gains the ability to drain two life-energy levels, but he can now be destroyed by a stake through the heart. The character cannot regenerate while the stake is in place, but he will be completely restored if the stake is removed.



Chapter Eight

The Path of the Priest

Who are these coming to sacrifice?
To what green altar,
O misterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peacfull citadel.
It emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.


– John Keats
Ode on a Grecian Urn

Because the Mists isolate Ravenloft from outside powers, many spells have strange effects in these dark lands. The dark powers distort the connection between the faithful and their patron gods and goddesses, attempting to isolate them from their source of strength, so priests suffer for their choice of occupation perhaps more than any other class.

This chapter describes several priest spells unique to the Demiplane of Dread and changes to many familiar spells. Priests from outside of Ravenloft do not know the altered effects of a spell until they cast it, at which time they instantly realize that something is amiss. Still, they may not know the exact nature of these alterations. Of course, if the change is an obvious one, the character may well deduce it for himself. Any magical item that casts or imitates an altered spell is subject to the same changes (see Chapter Eleven: Forged of Darkness).

The Absence of Power

Many have come to believe that the gods have no interest in the Demiplane of Dread. To be sure, a great deal of evidence supports this opinion. Any priest, paladin, or pilgrim who has come from beyond the Misty Borders of Ravenloft will attest that the Land of the Mists feels strangely empty. Despite this, most priest spells still function, meaning that priests, clerics, and their ilk draw power for their spells from somewhere else. Some claim that the dark powers, for whatever reason, are answering the prayers of these wandering holy men and granting them spells. As with so much about the dark powers, however, it is impossible to know if this is true or not.



Another common belief asserts that the gods of the multiverse have some sort of agreement to leave the Demiplane of Dread alone. Some have even suggested that the dark powers have shut the deities out of the Realm of Terror. Those who espouse this theory point out that in the past, the dark powers have proven to be as powerful as any divine being. To be sure, it does seem likely that the dark powers might hold off the efforts of an individual deity, but could they resist the efforts of a coalition of deities? It is doubtful, but then again, how can humans judge things on so grand a scale?

Cooperative Magic

By and large, cooperative magic functions normally in Ravenloft. The idea of several priests operating together for a single spell effect does not seem to concern the dark powers. Of course, the nature of the spell and its application may well require the participants to attempt powers checks.

Faith Magic

Faith magic works on the principle of devotional power, accumulated through mass worship. The more worshipers that participate, the stronger the magic will be. Since Ravenloft has few organized religions, faith magic is difficult to achieve.

Still, the Demiplane of Dread is not without churches and theologians. A handful of well-known organized religions, underground faiths, and forgotten cults continue to practice religions outlawed centuries ago. For example, the Church of Ezra has spread throughout most of the Core domains (see Chapter Five), and the realm of G'Henna is ruled by a priest whose mastery of faith magic may be second to none (see Chapter Three).

Quest Spells

Most rules for this type of magic as given in the *Tome of Magic* still apply. Deities reserve quest spells for special situations relating to their own interests. Since none of the powers seem to take interest in Ravenloft, few quest spells should be granted. Even powers who represent the forces of good have, for whatever reason, turned a blind eye to Ravenloft. It is not enough to say that a quest spell should be granted to combat the forces of evil. The cause must be much more directly related to the deity's interests.

The alterations to quest spells described in this chapter are optional. The direct attention of a power is involved to receive a quest spell, and it is conceivable that a deity could override the restrictions of Ravenloft. The Dungeon Master must make judgments based upon the adventure and campaign. Keep in mind that this is a Gothic horror setting. The characters should feel frightened and powerless, but they should also be able to triumph.

Summoning

Ravenloft limits the spells in this sphere. A given domain may not offer a full complement of animals and monsters, and priests cannot summon animals that do not live in the domain. To determine whether a particular animal may inhabit an area, check the domain's description. If the text does not state otherwise, Dungeon Masters can assume that all normal animals are available. If the animal is a type that the lord of the domain can control, however, the lord's power supersedes the priest's magic. The animal still appears when summoned, but it may not be friendly, depending on the lord's instructions.

Characters can summon creatures or monsters from outside of Ravenloft, but the subjects of these spells might be very unhappy when they learn that they are imprisoned in the Land of Mists. Nonevil beings will expect a very good explanation at the least, and evil creatures might even attack the priest. See the specific summoning spells in the following pages for exact effects.

War

The spells in this sphere are intended for use in either the *Battlesystem* rules or *Battlesystem: Skirmishes* games. Ravenloft campaigns rarely use these rules, as Gothic horror and medieval battles do not often work well together. However, war spells are appropriate in a few select situations. On occasion, a group of irate villagers (usually brandishing torches and pitchforks) may go monster hunting. Some of the spells from the sphere of war are appropriate for use on these angry crowds.

War spells cannot create a mob or incite a crowd to hunt down the monster. A situation must already exist in which a mob or crowd has gathered with the express purpose to hunt down a monster, break into a castle, or engage in some other mass combat activity. The crowd must contain at least ten adults for it to qualify as a unit in *Battlesystem* game terms.

Every mob must also have a leader. Usually a particularly incensed member of the crowd, someone who has been personally wronged by the situation or monster, functions as the leader. If the leader ever falls, there is a 25% chance for a new leader to rise from the ranks of the mob. This should also be someone personally wronged by the situation or monster. If no such individual exists, the crowd will disperse in 1d10 minutes.

A mob has a morale rating of 9. When used in an adventure, crowds and mobs do not make fear or horror checks; those rules apply only to individuals. The mob rolls a morale check in any circumstance normally dictated by the AD&D game rules and in any situation where an individual would roll a fear, horror, or madness check.

Altered Priest Spells

The priest spells listed in Table 22: Altered Priest Spells function differently in Ravenloft. The exact changes described below supplement the descriptions in the *Player's Handbook* and *Tome of Magic*. Versions of altered spells that work normally in Ravenloft appear in parentheses.

Table 22: Altered Priest Spells

Analyze balance (1st)
Courage (1st)
Detect evil/detect good (1st)
Emotion read (1st)
Know age (1st)
Morale (1 st)
Speak with astral traveler (1st)
Thought capture (1st)
Create holy symbol * (2nd)
Know alignment (2nd)
Mind read (2nd)
Mystic transfer (2nd)
Nap (2nd)
Ratty (2nd)
Sanctify/defile * (2nd)
Animate dead * (3rd)
Astral window (3rd)
Choose future (3rd)
Call woodland beings (4th)
Dimensional folding (4th)
Focus * (4th)
Join with astral traveler (4th)
Leadership/doubt (4th)
Modify memory * (4th)
Probability control (4th)
Rapport (4th)
Reflecting pool (4th)
Thought broadcast (4th)
Weather stasis (4th)
Commune (5th)
Dispel evil/dispel good (5th)
Magic font (5th)
Plane shift (5th)
Quest (5th)
Raise dead * / slay living * (5th)
True seeing (5th)
Word of recall (6th)
Astral spell (7th)
(Breath of life) /breath of death * (7th)
Conjure earth elemental/dismiss earth elemental (7th)
(Restoration) /Energy drain * (7th)
Gate * (7th)
Holy word/unholy word * (7th)
Reincarnation * (7th)
Resurrection/destruction * (7th)
Shadow engines (7th)
Spirit of power * (7th)
Succor (reversible) (7th)
Uncontrolled weather (7th)
Animal horde (quest)
Circle of sunmotes (quest)
Conformance (quest)
Elemental swarm (quest)
Etherwalk (quest)

(Cure disease) /cause disease * (3rd)	Age creature * / (restore youth) (6th)	Highway (quest)
Emotion control (3rd)	Conjure fire elemental/dismiss fire elemental (6th)	Imago interrogation (quest)
Feign death * (3rd)	Find the path (6th)	Planar quest (quest)
Helping hand (3rd)	The great circle/the black circle * (6th)	Revelation (quest)
Negative plane protection (3rd)	Group mind (6th)	Storm of vengeance (quest)
Remove curse/bestow curse * (3rd)	Land of stability (6th)	Undead plague * (quest)
Speak with dead * (3rd)	Sol's searing orb (6th)	Ward matrix (quest)
Abjure (4th)		

* Could require a Ravenloft powers check

First-Level Spells

Analyze Balance: In Ravenloft, no spell or magical item can reveal good or evil in a creature's alignment. When assessing how many "grades" a creature is removed from neutral, the only possible answers are one and zero, as the spell would only detect that a creature is lawful or chaotic (one grade away from neutral) or neutral (zero grades away from neutral). This same rule applies to analyzing the alignment of areas and objects.

Courage: As noted earlier for spells in the sphere of war, a crowd of villagers can be given courage with this spell; thus, the next time they are required to roll a morale check (most likely to be when they first sight a monster up close), they automatically pass it. Unfortunately for the mob, actually fighting the monster will almost certainly require another morale check. This spell lasts until the next dawn or twelve hours, whichever is greater.

Detect Evil/Detect Good: No one can magically detect good or evil here. Thus, neither this spell nor its reverse work in Ravenloft.

Emotion Read: This spell functions normally in Ravenloft, but the Dungeon Master should keep in mind that self-willed undead can project a barrier of false thoughts and emotions.

Know Age: This spell judges the age of the physical body; in the case of many undead, this provides interesting answers. The bodies of some undead, like vampires, stop aging at the moment of their deaths. A vampire might really be four hundred years old while his body is preserved at thirty-seven.

Any creature whose body has ceased aging is allowed a saving throw vs. spell. If successful, the spell reports the apparent age of the body. If the saving throw fails, it reports the true age (from the moment of the creature's birth). Zombies, skeletons, ghosts, and banshees and the like do not have preserved bodies, so for all of these cases, the spell functions normally.

Morale: As stated in *Tome of Magic*, this spell improves the morale of a military unit. In Ravenloft, the most likely use is with a crowd of villagers storming a castle or chasing a monster. The typical mob has a morale rating of 9. Thus, if raised by one the mob has a morale of 10, and if raised by three it has a morale of 12. This improvement remains in effect until the next dawn or for twelve hours, whichever is longer.

Speak With Astral Traveler: Since astral travel does not function in Ravenloft, this spell has no astral travelers to affect. If through some outrageous quirk of domain laws an astral traveler is encountered, then the spell works normally.

Thought Capture: This spell resembles the metapsionic devotion retrospection, allowing the caster to capture wandering thoughts set loose from their owners. In Ravenloft, such thoughts still bear the stamp of the personalities who created them, and the thoughts of the lords of the domains are stronger than others. As a result, this spell has a 10% chance of gathering a thought from the lord of the domain. If the location where the spell is cast is visited regularly by the lord of the domain, the chance rises to 50%.

The thoughts of domain lords can be tainted with evil and horrors that should not be contemplated. Characters who gather a thought from a domain lord have a 25% chance of being forced to attempt a madness check. Even if he does not have to make the madness check, he must still make a horror check.

Second-Level Spells

Create Holy Symbol: This spell functions normally in Ravenloft, except that the lord of the domain knows instantly that a holy symbol has been created somewhere in his domain. If the symbol is of any evil alignment, that is all the lord learns. If the symbol belongs to any neutral alignment, he knows the approximate location of the newly created symbol (e.g. somewhere in the village or on the grounds of the ruined monastery). If it is of any good alignment, the lord knows the exact location of the priest who cast the spell.

Creating an evil holy symbol warrants a Ravenloft powers check.

Know Alignment: Ravenloft insulates evil from detection. As with the standard version of this spell, the target gets a saving throw to avoid detection altogether. Even if that roll fails, the spell can detect only a chaotic, neutral, or lawful alignment; the spell never reveals evil or good alignment.

Mind Read: This spell has difficulty penetrating the barrier of false thoughts presented by self-willed undead. Thus, although normal folk get no saving throw, self-willed undead do. If the saving throw succeeds, the undead creature can plant whatever thoughts it wishes into the caster's mind. If the saving throw fails, the priest penetrates the veil and delves into the foul depths of the creature's evil mind. He learns everything listed in the spell description. However, he must roll a madness check after experiencing the abhorrent mind of an undead monster. Sometimes an undead creature chooses not to resist the spell, allowing the priest to look at things mortals were not meant to see.

A madness check may also be necessary for reading the minds of living creatures brimming with loathsome evil, such as mind flayers.

Mystic Transfer: Unlike many spells in Ravenloft, this one can cross domain borders, provided that they have not been closed by the lord. In addition, if either domain lord closes his borders, the link is severed.

Nap: This spell can negate the effects of a failed fear check, as the passage of time and a good sleep allow the terror to pass. The *nap* spell does not work as well on failed horror checks, merely allowing the victim of a failed horror check to attempt a new check. It also allows a temporary respite from those horror check results affected by a *sleep* spell, even if the new check fails (see Chapter Six: Fear, Horror, and Madness). Also, this refreshing sleep eliminates any accumulated penalties.

Rally: Although designed specifically for use with the *Battlesystem* rules, this spell can be used with a mob or crowd of villagers. If the villagers have failed a morale check (and are probably fleeing the scene) this spell might rally them. Another morale check is rolled, and if it is successful, the mob recovers its lost poise and can approach the situation again.

Sanctify/Defile: *Sanctify* works normally in Ravenloft. If cast in a sinkhole of evil (as described in Appendix Three: Character Classes), the two effects cancel each other out. For the duration of the spell, neither positive or negative modifiers apply. If the area of the sinkhole exceeds the area of the spell effect, then the region not covered by the spell is still a sinkhole of evil, with the original modifiers.

Defile adds its bonuses to those of the sinkhole, making the place even more foul and evil. Using this version of the spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Third-Level Spells

Animate Dead: This spell works almost too well in Ravenloft. Normally the caster can animate a number of skeletons or zombies approximately equal to his level in Hit Dice. When a priest casts this spell in Ravenloft, however, it animates twice the usual amount. (Use the regular formula, but double the result.) The caster can add as many Hit Dice to the monsters as desired, as long as the total is no more than twice his own level.

Dungeon Masters should keep in mind that the Hit Dice of an undead creature affect its resistance to turning. Further, those creatures whose Hit Dice exceed the caster's level can attempt a saving throw vs. spell to break free of control.

The casting of this spell prompts a Ravenloft powers check.

Astral Window: The Astral Plane is not accessible via most spells in Ravenloft. However, since *astral window* does not attempt to move anything between Ravenloft and the Astral Plane, the spell works normally, except that creatures cannot leave Ravenloft through the window. However, beings can still enter the Demiplane of Dread if they succeed in the roll described in the *Tome of Magic* entry.

Choose Future: For the most part, this spell functions normally in Ravenloft. Horror checks are not rolled twice, however. The first roll applies to both futures. (If necessary, the Dungeon Master can roll to pretend that it might have been possible to get a different result.)

Cause Disease: *Cause Disease* is the reverse of *cure disease*. Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Emotion Control: This spell functions normally in Ravenloft. The courage option can be used to remove the effects of a failed fear check. In that case, it cancels the fear but does not provide its normal bonuses. This spell does not affect failed horror checks.

Feign Death: This spell requires the caster to make a Ravenloft powers check.

Helping Hand: This ghostly hand cannot cross domain borders. If the target is in a different domain than the caster, the hand does not find him.

Negative Plane Protection: Ravenloft insulates undead from the influence of other planes. Thus, the attacking undead monster suffers only 1d6 points of damage from this spell, and it can attempt a saving throw vs. death magic for no damage at all.

Remove Curse/Bestow Curse: *Remove curse* works poorly in Ravenloft, where its duration is limited rather than permanent. The target of this magic can attempt a saving throw vs. spell to temporarily rid himself of a curse, but it only holds back the curse for one turn per level of the spellcaster.

Curses are very powerful in Ravenloft (see Chapter Twelve: The Whispered Evil). The stronger the curse, the less likely it is that a mere spell can suspend it. Table 23 lists the saving throw modifiers according to the power of the curse.

Bestow curse works as described, but it requires a Ravenloft powers check with the modifiers given in the table below (expressed as positive percentage values).

Table 23: *Remove Curse/Bestow Curse* Penalties

Curse	Saving Throw Penalty	Powers Check Penalty
Embarrassing	0	0%
Frustrating	-1	+1%
Troublesome	-2	+2%
Dangerous	-3	+3%
Lethal	-6	+6%

Speak With Dead: Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Fourth-Level Spells

Abjure: Normally, this spell sends creatures from the Outer Planes back to their homes. The spell's chance of success is 50%, plus (or minus) 5% for each positive (or negative) difference in level between the caster and the target. Of course, one cannot so easily escape the Demiplane of Dread. If this spell succeeds in Ravenloft, it merely sends the creature to a random location in the Demiplane (but not across a closed domain border).

Call Woodland Beings: The fairy folk listed in the *Player's Handbook* do not inhabit any of the known domains of Ravenloft. Furthermore, the lord of the domain in which the spell is cast controls the spell's results. The lord can send any creature in his land to answer the summons. Of course, the being will obey the lord's instruction and not the caster's.

Dimensional Folding: This spell cannot connect areas in different domains. The priest cannot fold the Demiplane to connect to any area outside the domain where the spell was cast.

Focus: Most domain lords can detect the casting of a focus spell. Domain lords steeped in the arcane lore of magic tend to have this power, as do those of strong supernatural origins. However, lords of more normal or mortal backgrounds cannot usually detect a focus any better than their subjects. For example, Strahd von Zarovich or Harkon Lukas could almost certainly detect a focus; on the other hand, Vlad Drakov and Ivana Boritsi could not.

If priest creates a focus devoted to an evil alignment, those domain lords who can sense such things will know only that the deed has been done, nothing more. If the priest creates a focus devoted to a neutral alignment, the lord will know the approximate location of the casting (within a mile or so). If the spell creates a good focus, however, the lord knows exactly where it was cast.

As described in the *Tome of Magic*, focus amplifies only positive effects of the listed spells. In Ravenloft, it can also focus some of the reversed spells. Focus can affect the following reversible spells: *bless/curse*, cure blindness/cause blindness*, cure disease/cause disease*, detect lie/undetectable lie, dispel evil/dispel good*, know alignment/undetectable alignment, protection from evil/protection from good*, purify food & drink/putrefy food & drink*, remove fear/cause fear*, tongues/babble, and true seeing/false seeing*. Those reverses marked with an asterisk (*) force the caster to roll a Ravenloft powers check. The table below gives the few additional spells that focus can affect in the Demiplane of Dread.

Table 24: Additional Spells Affected by *Focus*

Spell	Possible Focus Type
Accelerate healing	S/I
Anti-vermin barrier	S/I/L
Aura of comfort	S/I
Calm chaos	S
Efficacious monster ward	S
Elemental forbiddance	S/I/L
Emotion control[+]	S/I/L
Land of stability	S
Slow rot	I/L
Undead ward	S/I/L
Zone of sweet air	S/I
Zone of truth	S/I

[+] A single emotion must be specified.

Creating a focus with devotional energy gathered from followers of an evil deity, regardless of the spell, also warrants a Ravenloft powers check.

Join With Astral Traveler: This spell simply does not work in Ravenloft, as it lies in the Ethereal Plane.

Leadership/Doubt: The *Battlesystem* game use for *leadership* is inappropriate for Ravenloft. However, the priest can use this spell to single out a person in a mob and make him into a leader. This new leader could then conduct the mob in search of a monster or other objective. The presence of the leader grants the mob a+ 1 morale bonus. Should the leader die during the hunt, the mob must immediately roll a morale check. Refer to the "Sphere of War" section earlier in this chapter for more information about mobs and crowds.

Doubt removes leadership qualities from a person. If successfully cast upon the leader of a mob, the mob must immediately roll a successful morale check or disperse. Even if the check succeeds, the mob no longer receives the bonus for having a leader. It can attack an immediately visible target, but if the mob has no obvious target, it disperses.

Modify Memory: This spell can negate the effects of a failed fear or horror check. It either wipes the memory of the event from the person or alters his memory so that the horror of the situation is masked.

This spell can cause sinister effects as well. If used to force a person to relive a scene that was originally cause for a horror check, the victim reacts as if he were really there. If a previous horror check for that situation failed, then the results of that check may come back to haunt the victim. For example, if the previous result had been "aversion", the character again feels the need to run in horror. If the previous check succeeded, the victim must roll a new horror check, with a +1 bonus for having survived the scene before. Making a person relive a scene of horror almost certainly warrants a powers check.

Probability Control: This spell cannot alter the probabilities or effects of a fear, horror, madness, or powers check. It affects only the chances of an action taken by a creature. Since these checks are not actions, but reactions, this spell does not affect them.

Rapport: Of course, self-willed undead have the ability to raise a barrier of false thoughts, effectively blocking this spell. If such a creature chooses to enter into a rapport with the priest, it has a choice of actions: It can feed innocent thoughts and emotions via the barrier, or it can allow the priest a true glimpse of its malevolent inner self.

Any normal person who gets a close look at the twisted mind of a self-willed undead monster must make a madness check. For this reason, many undead monsters would allow the priest access to its mind, knowing the possible effects. Since the participants choose which thoughts and emotions to share, the undead creature need not reveal anything of importance.

Reflecting Pool: Instead of offering a window to another plane or grounded setting, this spell creates an image of swirling fog, and the priest actually sees a specific location in the Mists of Ravenloft. The priest has a 10% chance of glimpsing some horrid, evil creature within the image, prompting a horror check.

Thought Broadcast: Any self-willed undead creature subjected to this spell broadcasts only false thoughts. It has total control over these thoughts and can even send out the complete opposite of its true thoughts.

Those within range of the spell may be forced to make fear, horror, or madness checks at the Dungeon Master's discretion, depending upon the nature of the subject's mind or thoughts.

Weather Stasis: The effects of this spell cannot override the domain lord's control of the weather. The lord may choose to let the spell work normally, however.

Fifth-Level Spells

Commune: Since Ravenloft is effectively cut off from the rest of the multiverse, this spell does not function in the Demiplane of Dread.

Dispel Evil/Dispel Good: Normally this spell can return evil, summoned creatures to their home planes, but the dark and deadly creatures in Ravenloft cannot be dispatched so easily. If this spell succeeds in Ravenloft, it merely sends the creatures to a random location within the Demiplane (but not across a closed domain border).

The spell does remove evil enchantments, though it is generally ineffective against curses laid down by a nonmagical means. The same restrictions apply to the reverse of the spell.

Magic Font: Just as with reflecting pool (above), this spell reveals a random location in the Mists, with a 10% chance that a ghastly monster will wander into view, prompting a horror check.

Plane Shift: This spell transports the character to a different domain within Ravenloft, so it cannot help anyone or anything escape the Demiplane altogether. Further, it does not transport across closed borders.

Quest: Normally, a target who does not follow a quest suf- fers cumulative penalties to all saving throws. In Ravenloft, the caster can also assign another additional punishment for not following the assigned quest. The punishment cannot be too severe or life threatening, but it must slowly worsen each day that the quest is ignored. Likewise, following the quest should gradually cancel the punishment. For example, a character might shrink 10% in height each day he violates the quest. Each day the character returns to the quest, he reverses one day of shrinkage.

Raise Dead/Slay Living: If the target of a raise dead spell fails his resurrection survival roll, he becomes an undead creature of a type equal in Hit Dice to his former level. Vampires are the most powerful creatures a raise dead spell can create in this fashion, and they retain any abilities they had in life. In campaigns where the *Requiem* rules are being used, characters raised as undead should be converted according to the guidelines presented in that accessory.

Casting this spell (or its reverse, *slay living*) requires a Ravenloft powers check.

True Seeing: When priests detect alignment with this spell, they discern only law or chaos, not good or evil (see know alignment). Otherwise, the spell functions as described in the Player's Handbook, with the following clarifications:

- The description of this spell states that the caster sees through illusions and "apparitions". This does not mean ghosts or other intangible beings, who are real while not physical. Undead creatures of this ilk do not appear differently under this spell. If they look like normal people, this spell usually does not change the caster's perception.
- Enchanted creatures include conjured or summoned creatures and beings under some sort of controlling spell such as charm or geas. True seeing reveals these spell effects. Vampires and lycanthropes control animal troops through enchantment, but they do not control subservient creatures of their own kind this way.
- Polymorphed creatures and items become apparent. A lycanthrope in animal form is not considered polymorphed, nor is a vampire or similar creature with natural shapechanging abilities. As a general rule, if the creature can change shape as part of its nature, this spell (when cast in Ravenloft) does not reveal the change. In order to qualify as polymorphed, a transformation must involve spellcasting.

Sixth-Level Spells

Age Creature: Any person killed by this spell must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or become a ghost. Intentionally killing a person with this spell calls for a Ravenloft powers check. The reverse of this spell, *restore youth*, functions normally in the Demiplane of Dread.

In campaigns utilizing the *Requiem* rules, the guidelines in that accessory should be used to transform characters into ghosts.

Conjure Fire Elemental/Dismiss Fire Elemental: A conjured elemental cannot leave Ravenloft by means of a *dismiss fire elemental* or any similar spell. It must find its own escape from the Demiplane, just like those player characters who wish to flee the Mists.

Also, the priest has more difficulty controlling the summoned creature in Ravenloft. Upon arriving, the creature makes a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty; a successful roll allows it to act freely. This does not mean that the elemental automatically attacks the priest who summoned it, but it very well might once it learns that it cannot quickly return to its home.

Find the Path: This spell cannot find locations outside the domain in which it was cast. If Mists surround the domain, the caster can focus on them in order to reach the border. The spell still provides an escape from maze spells and helps the caster bypass traps.

Some exits from the Demiplane are physical locations. If such an exit is within the domain, this spell can guide the caster to it, provided the caster knows the nature of the exit. In this case, the spell lasts only one round per level of the caster. As some portals appear only under specific conditions, find the path has no effect if the portal is not present when the spell is cast.

The Great Circle/the Black Circle: Undead are stronger in Ravenloft than on other planes. Thus, *the great circle* has a reduced effect in the Demiplane of Dread. This spell destroys any undead with 6 Hit Dice or fewer in the area of effect. All other undead suffer 1d6 points of damage per priest in the circle. Creatures of evil alignment receive 1d4 points of damage per priest in the circle. In the latter two cases, the victim may roll a saving throw vs. death magic to halve the damage.

The *black circle* works as described in the *Tome of Magic*. However, casting it requires a powers check for each priest in the circle.

Group Mind: Of course, self-willed undead have the ability to raise a barrier of false thoughts, effectively blocking this spell. If such a creature chooses to enter into a rapport with a priest, it has a choice of actions: It can feed innocent thoughts and emotions via the barrier, or it can allow the priest a true glimpse of its malevolent inner self. Since the participants choose which thoughts and emotions to share, the undead creature need not reveal anything of importance.

Any normal person who gets a close look at the twisted mind of a self-willed undead monster must make a madness check. For this reason, an undead monster may allow the priest access to its mind, knowing the possible effects.

Land of Stability: This spell does not supersede the domain lord's control of the land. If the lord's defined powers specify control over the land (or any effects described in the spell), he can override the effects. However, he may decide to let the spell work normally.

Sol's Searing Orb: The light from this spell is considered to be the equivalent of daylight. Therefore, in addition to normal damage inflicted by this spell, it harms creatures affected by daylight as if they were standing outside on a bright summer day.

Word of Recall: This spell works normally, with a few exceptions: It cannot transport the character off the Demiplane or across a closed domain border.

Seventh-Level Spells

Astral Spell: Since Ravenloft lies in the Ethereal Plane, this spell does not function here.

Breath of Death: This spell is the reverse of *breath of life*. Casting *breath of death* requires the caster to make a Ravenloft powers check.

Conjure Earth Elemental/Dismiss Earth Elemental: A conjured elemental cannot leave Ravenloft by means of a *dismiss earth elemental* or any similar spell. It must find its own escape from the Demiplane, just like those player characters who wish to flee the Mists.

Also, the priest has more difficulty controlling the summoned creature in Ravenloft. Upon arriving, the creature makes a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty; a successful roll allows it to act freely. This does not mean that the elemental automatically attacks the priest who summoned it, but it very well might once it learns that it cannot quickly return to its home.

Energy Drain: This spell is the reverse of *restoration*. Any person killed by this spell must roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or become an undead creature. In campaigns utilizing the *Requiem* rules, the guidelines presented in that accessory should be used for characters who become undead.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Gate: The gate created by this spell leads into (but not out of) Ravenloft. Thus, a summoned creature must find another exit, just like any other being. This entrapment often infuriates the monster, provoking an attack on the caster and any companions.

Using this spell to summon an evil being calls for a Ravenloft powers check.

Holy Word/Unholy Word: Casters can use either version of this spell only on their home plane. Hence, only Ravenloft native player characters (created with the rules in this book) can use the *holy word* spell in the Demiplane of Dread. Those from other realms will find that the spell fails when cast.

Even if the spell does function, the Mists somewhat alter its effects. For example, neither this spell nor its reverse can drive creatures from the Demiplane. If a caster attempts to force creatures from Ravenloft, the spell randomly transports the targets to another location in the Land of the Mists (though not across closed domain borders). Following this, the transported creatures cannot come within sight of the caster for a full day.

Casting *unholy word* warrants a Ravenloft powers check.

Reincarnation: In Ravenloft, the target of this spell has a 1% chance of being reincarnated as an undead creature.

If this happens, the person becomes a monster type with Hit Dice are equal to his former experience level. Like *raise dead*,

this spell cannot create undead more powerful than vampires.

In campaigns utilizing the *Requiem* rules, characters raised as undead should be converted according to the guidelines presented in that accessory.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Resurrection/Destruction: If the target of a *resurrection* spell fails his resurrection survival roll, he becomes an undead creature of a type equal in Hit Dice to his former level. Vampires are the most powerful creatures a *resurrection* spell can create in this fashion, and they retain any abilities they had in life. In campaigns utilizing the *Requiem* rules, characters raised as undead should be converted according to the guidelines presented in that accessory.

Casting this spell or its reverse, *destruction*, requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Shadow Engines: When this spell expires or is cancelled or disrupted for any reason, it has a 50% chance of causing a small horde of real shadows (as described in the *Monstrous Manual* tome) to rise up from the shattered illusions. A roll is made for each engine as it dissipates. Each engine can spawn 2d8 shadows, which will almost certainly attack those around them (including the caster).

Spirit of Power: This spell normally enables several priests of high level to call down an avatar of their deity. An unspoken law of nonintervention by the powers of the multiverse makes this spell inoperable in Ravenloft. However, the caster has a 25% chance of summoning some other extraplanar creature. The nature of the summoned creature will be mandated by the home plane of the deity being contacted. Thus, a call to a deity of fire might result in the arrival of a fire elemental.

Should a creature appear in response to this spell, it must make an immediate reaction check to determine its impression of the summoners. If hostile, it will likely attack at once. When the creature learns that it is trapped in the Demiplane of Dread, it will probably seek revenge on those who have imprisoned it.

Attempting to summon the avatar of an evil deity is cause for a powers check.

Succor: Neither this spell nor its reverse can transport anyone or anything out of Ravenloft or across a closed border. Otherwise, it functions normally.

Uncontrolled Weather: Domain lords can sometimes control weather, or at least exert certain influences upon it. If a lord's control is at odds with this spell, the domain lord automatically wins. In many cases, however, he does not bother to contest the spell. Still, if a domain lord has the ability to counter this spell, he will be aware that it has been cast even if he does not opt to thwart it.

Quest Spells

Animal Horde: Some domain lords can control the animals in their lands, or at least some species. Any of those not under the control of a domain lord may answer the summons of this spell. However, the domain lord's control always takes precedence over that of the spell. Still, the lord frequently allows the animals to answer the summons in order to discover the priest's plans. Once he knows, he may or may not choose to override the priest's hold on the animals.

Circle of Sunmotes: The light from the motes can harm creatures vulnerable to normal sunlight. Beyond that, the spell functions normally.

Conformance: This spell does not affect the chances of fear, horror, madness, or powers checks.

Elemental Swarm: At the end of this spell's duration, summoned elementals cannot return home, which tends to infuriate them. Since the spell has expired, the priest no longer has any control over them, so the Dungeon Master can decide whether or not they attack.

Etherwalk: This spell transports the priest and his party into the Border Ethereal. Once there, however, they find themselves unable to travel any deeper into the Ethereal Plane. They can re-enter Ravenloft at the location from which they left whenever they choose.

Highway: This spell cannot cross closed domain borders.

Imago Interrogation: Normally, this spell enables the priest to travel the planes, and even through time (in spirit form). Here, he can travel only around the Demiplane, though not across closed domain borders.

In Ravenloft, this spell can easily traverse the barrier of time. Attempts to travel back in time to a period before Ravenloft existed may be catastrophic, however. The instant a priest enters a time prior to the coming of Castle Ravenloft, he is briefly plunged into an icy cold darkness. The spell ends at that point, and the priest must make a madness check.

Planar Quest: The Mists of Ravenloft severely restrict this spell. Only three planes have sufficient connections to the Demiplane of Dread to affect this spell: the Border Ethereal, the Demiplane of Shadow, and the Negative Energy Plane. Even those planes do not allow the traveler from Ravenloft to do anything more than walk their shores; the traveler must either remain on the fringes of these planes forever or return to Ravenloft (to the location from which he left).

Revelation: Even when using this spell, priests cannot discern good or evil in Ravenloft. All of the restrictions for the *true seeing* spell apply to this one as well.

Storm of Vengeance: The power of a domain lord to control the weather takes precedence over any spell. If the domain lord has the power to control the weather, he can calm this storm automatically. In addition, such domain lords are instantly aware that such magic has been employed.

Undead Plague: This spell works far better in Ravenloft than on the Prime Material Plane. Here, it has an area of effect totalling forty thousand square yards (an area two hundred yards per side), which translates to four thousand skeletons. The skeletons are turned as zombies.

Casting this spell calls for a Ravenloft powers check.

Ward Matrix: This spell can join distant wards into a network so that each experiences the cumulative effects of all the wards. In Ravenloft, this spell cannot breach the borders of a domain. Thus, only wards in the same domain as the caster can be included in the matrix.

New Priest Spells

Those who are held wise among men,
and who search the reasons of things,
are those who bring the most sorrow
on themselves.

- Euripides
Medea

Many spells that exist in Ravenloft are still unknown in the rest of the multiverse. For the most part, no sane man would attempt to master these dark and terrible magics. Still, some seek this forbidden lore despite the great agony that may accompany it.

***Aura of Discomfort* (Evocation)**
Reversible
Sphere: Travelers
Level: 2
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting Time: 5
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Saving Throw: None

Evil priests use this spell (the reverse of *aura of comfort*) as a form of mild curse, subjecting the victim to an uncomfortable environment for the duration of the spell. The caster can choose a temperature from -20° to 140° Fahrenheit and select a weather effect, such as rain, sleet, or snow.

No one, not even the target, can see these effects, though he still suffers the results. The effects only slightly hamper the target. He can move and fight normally but suffers a penalty of -1 (or -5%) to all actions that require a die roll for success, including attacks, saving throws, and ability checks. Other adjustments may apply at the discretion of the Dungeon Master. The character may also have to dress according to the perceived conditions, rather than match actual conditions. A character wearing just a loincloth in a tropical jungle could actually suffer frostbite as a result of this spell.

***Zone of Deception* (Enchantment/Charm)**
Reversible
Sphere: Wards
Level: 2
Range: 30 yards
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 round/level
Casting Time: 5
Area of Effect: 5-foot square/level
Saving Throw: Negates
This is the reverse of the *zone of truth* spell. Everyone within the area of effect knows immediately that they may speak only

lies. They can decide exactly what they say and how they say it, but every statement must be a lie. Because questions, suppositions, and exclamations are not statements, they are not affected. The Dungeon Master should carefully examine every statement and classify it as true, false, or an exception to the spell. For example, the statement "I can only lie" is a true statement under the influence of this spell and, therefore, cannot be spoken.

***Corpse Whisper* (Necromancy)**
Sphere: Necromantic
Level: 3
Range: 60 feet
Components: S, M
Duration: Special, up to 1 day
Casting Time: 6
Area of Effect: 1 undead creature
Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the caster to transmit a message to an undead creature. The message forms in the mind of the creature, in the natural voice of the caster. If the caster currently controls the undead creature, he does not need to be within its line of sight. The caster cannot necessarily read the mind or thoughts of the undead creature.

Only self-willed undead recipients not under the current control of the caster can disobey the command. All self-willed undead can do as they please, but fear of their master will usually spur them into immediate obedience.

The spell establishes a link with the undead creature, enabling up to half as many one-round, one-sentence messages to be sent as the caster has levels (rounded down). For example, a 9th-level caster could send four messages to an undead creature, each message requiring a single round to send and consisting of a single sentence. Even if the caster sends no commands, the spell wears off in twenty-four hours.

Although the creature must be within sixty feet of the necromancer when he casts the spell, it can then travel up to a mile away and still receive commands. As one might expect, the spell will not function if the caster and undead minion are in different domains and the borders of either (or any intervening domain) are closed.

The material component of this spell is the tongue of a dead man. Casting this spell requires a powers check.

***Eyes of the Undead* (Necromancy)**
Sphere: Necromantic
Level: 3
Range: 40 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 2 hours/level
Casting Time: 6
Area of Effect: 1 undead creature
Saving Throw: Negates

This caster can use this spell on any dead or undead body, size S or larger. Once cast, he forges a link that allows him to see and hear anything that the corpse can.

The caster cannot control the undead creature through this spell, but must rely upon the creature's orders and instincts to provide the appropriate views. The more self-willed and intelligent the undead, the better the chance of seeing or hearing something useful. If the undead creature willingly serves the necromancer, it receives no saving throw. A dead body also receives no saving throw.

Although the corpse must be within forty yards when the spell is cast, it can move up to one mile away and still transmit to the caster. The spell ceases to work if the caster and target are in different domains and the borders of either (or any intervening domain) close.

The material components for this spell are an eye and ear of a dead man. Casting this spell requires a powers check.

***Feign Undead* (Necromancy)**
Sphere: Necromantic
Level: 4
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn+ 1 round/level
Casting Time: 7
Area of Effect: Person touched
Saving Throw: None

This spell allows the caster or any willing person to masquerade as a zombie. The person looks undead, ceases to breathe, and feels no pain or emotion. He also becomes immune to paralysis, poison, and energy-draining attacks. If poison is delivered while under the effects of this spell, it takes affect normally when the spell expires. Poisons to which the person was exposed before the casting of the spell, but that have not yet taken effect, can be forestalled, though they will take affect normally after the spell's expiration. Additionally, immunity to pain does not protect the person from harm; he still suffers damage normally. Spells that affect undead have no influence over the person, however, which can potentially reveal his true nature.

The person's body looks just like an animated corpse; his skin and flesh change color, shrinking to reveal bones, but his attire does not change. Also, his joints become stiff, causing jerky movement. He no longer attacks as a player character, but as a normal zombie (see the *Monstrous Manual* tome).

Any creature that sees the false zombie assumes that it is real. Unless ordered to do so, real undead creatures will not attack the subject. If the person does something out of character, though, anybody who sees him might deduce that things are not as they seem. Nonplayer characters are entitled to Wisdom checks to see if they notice the deception.

The material component for this spell is a bit of bone and dirt from a grave. Casting this spell requires a powers check.

***Cloud of Putrefication* (Evocation)**
Reversible
Sphere: Elemental (Air, Water)
Level: 5
Range: 30 yards
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 round/level
Casting Time: 8
Area of Effect: 20-foot cube
Saving Throw: None

This reverse of *cloud of purification* creates a billowy cloud of vile vapors that moves with the prevailing wind at a rate of twenty feet per round. A strong wind breaks it up in four rounds, and a greater wind (a gust of wind spell, for example) disperses it in one round, as does thick vegetation.

The cloud transmutes pure water into organic filth and rotting garbage. Small animals (mice, squirrels, etc.) mutate into rats

and rot grubs. Flies and other foul insects immediately rise up from the mess. If cast over a sewer or garbage heap, the spell doubles the size of the filth. The cloud lasts for only one round per level, but the effects are permanent until magically purified or negated by time (though flowing water also tends to eliminate the effects relatively quickly). This spell can spoil a castle's water supply or foul a small river.

Depending upon what the caster uses this spell for, it may well require a Ravenloft powers check.

***Living Ward* (Abjuration, Necromancy)**
Reversible
Sphere: Wards
Level: 5
Range: Special
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 2 turns
Area of Effect: Cube, 5-foot/level on a side
Saving Throw: None

This reverse of the undead ward spell prevents any living person from entering the area of effect. Animals and monsters are not affected by the ward. The caster can protect a cube-shaped area with sides that are five feet long per level of the caster. For example, a 15th-level caster can create a cube that is seventy-five feet on a side.

Any living person attempting to enter the area of the spell is "turned" as if it were an undead monster. Use the character's level and **Table 91: Turning Undead (Cleric)** in Appendix Three to determine his chances of being affected.

In any given round, the spell can affect only 1d6 creatures. Even if the die roll indicates destruction, the targets are merely forced out of the warded area. A person can make only one attempt to enter the ward. Living creatures within the area of effect when the spell is cast are unaffected. Still, should they ever leave, they may not be able to get back in.

This spell can be cast by a normal, living priest, but it is particularly effective when used by undead creatures. Strahd von Zarovich has a high-level minion who is able to cast this spell for him, should he ever need it.

***Divine Curse* (Abjuration)**
Sphere: All
Level: 6
Range: Special
Components: V
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None
This spell creates a terrible and lasting curse, so it can only be cast upon someone who has performed a great evil - at least in the eyes of the caster. The awful deed may even have been unintentional, but it must have yielded horrible results for the caster. The victim of the curse can be of any alignment.

The caster personally chooses the punishment inflicted on the victim. Wording is very important, so the player must record the exact phrasing for future reference. The curse may fail if the punishment is inappropriate, too harsh, or otherwise lacking (Dungeon Master's discretion). In this case, the Dungeon Master can choose to either guide the player to a curse that is acceptable or make the character wait to see if the curse takes effect.

The priest becomes a vessel for the divine wrath he invokes. He must clearly announce the curse in the presence of the evildoer. Thereafter, the curse is in effect, though its effects sometimes take time to surface. Instead, the curse may develop over months or years.

Divine curse can be lifted. The victim has two means of removing the curse. An *atonement* spell can lift the curse, provided the spell accompanies a great, heroic deed or similar act of expiation. Such an action must be an appropriate counter to the original evil deed. Sometimes, the curse itself may include an escape clause. Often the clue to lifting the curse is hidden somewhere within the wording. The Dungeon Master should encourage such clauses, since they do not necessarily provide an easy escape, as illustrated by this sample curse:

> *You have walked long upon the backs of the downtrodden. Now, each step you take shall be a painful blow to your flesh, until you stride barefoot to the summit of Mount Arabek between sunrise and sunset.*

At first the escape clause seems deadly, if not impossible, to fulfill, but a creative Dungeon Master or player should be able to circumvent the obvious. For instance, the cursed character might pay someone cast a haste spell upon him or otherwise increase his rate of travel.

The material components for this spell are a tiny silver gong and the priest's holy symbol. Details on curses are presented in Chapter Twelve. Powers checks are mandated in accordance with the rules outlined in that chapter.

***Ancient Curse* (Abjuration)**
Sphere: All
Level: 7
Range: Special
Components: V
Duration: Special
Casting Time: 1 round
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: None

This magic works like the Gill-level divine curse spell, except that this curse can also affect the descendants of the targeted character. Here is an example of an ancient curse:

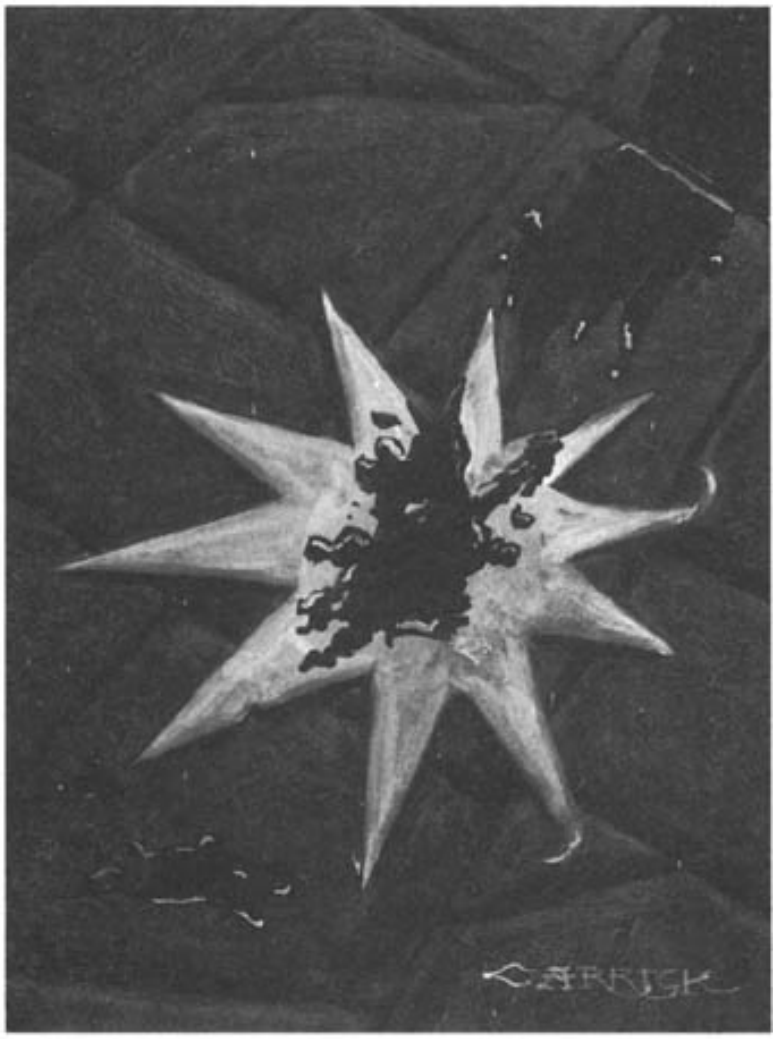
> *You and your seed shall wither at the touch of gold and silver unto the seventh generation. Always shall you want for the charity and comfort that you have so long denied your subjects.*

If the cause is great, the curse may be worded to last indefinitely, affecting all descendants of the offender. If he provides an escape clause, the caster can often cause more powerful curses. In the example above, the curse might continue:

> *Only when you have given back tenfold what was taken, shall your heirs prosper.*

***Tomb Ward* (Abjuration)**
Sphere: Wards
Level: 7
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 1 day
Area of Effect: 1 tomb, a cube 30 feet/side
Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the priest to cast a conditional curse upon a tomb. Anyone violating the tomb becomes subject to the curse. At one point during the casting of this spell, the priest must cast a either a *divine curse* or *ancient curse* spell to define the effects.



It takes a full day to cast this spell, and the priest cannot be interrupted at any time during the casting. He must walk through all the passages and rooms of the tomb, marking the walls, floors, ceilings, and doors with signs of the curse. During this time, the priest also sets down the exact conditions that will trigger the curse. They can be as simple as "any creature entering this tomb" or as complicated as "any mortal disturbing the remains of the king, removing his burial treasure, breaking or destroying his possessions, or defacing the, tomb".

The Dungeon Master determines the exact effects. In general, he should interpret the wording of the curse literally, though vague or unclear passages should be given unfavorable interpretations.

The priest has a limit to the size of tomb he can ward; it must fill an area no larger than a cube thirty feet on a side. If other priests assist the caster, however, each additional priest adds ten feet to each side of the cube. Therefore, seven priests (including the caster) can ward a cube- shaped area, up to ninety feet on a side.

The material components of this spell are the holy symbols of each priest involved. The symbols must be left in the tomb, frequently buried in the walls or floor. Optionally, a creature of the same race as the priest can be entombed alive instead of the holy symbol. A combination of creatures and holy symbols is acceptable, so long as each priest leaves at least one component. Entombing living creatures as a part of the spell mandates a powers check.

Chapter Nine

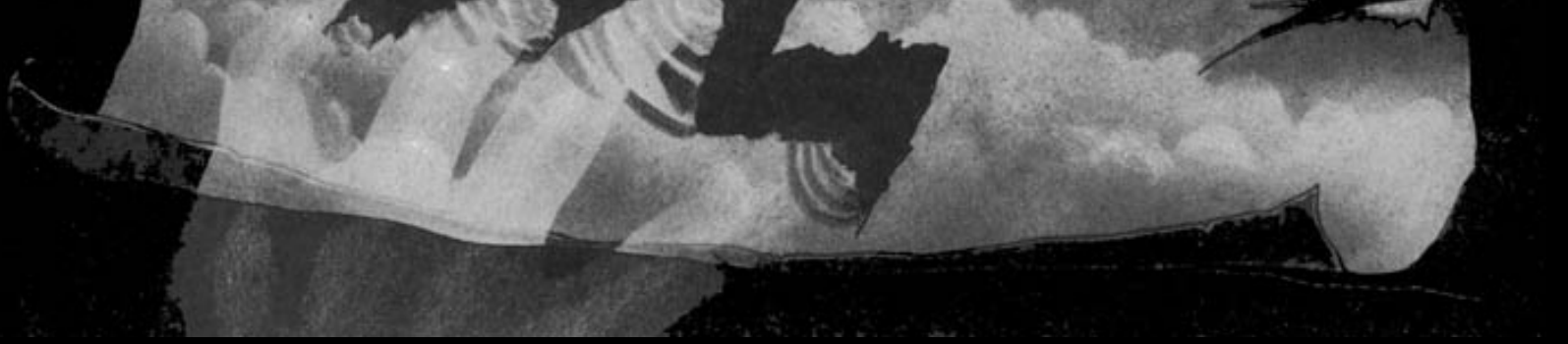
The Way of the Wizard

The mater then placed himself between the two ladies, and, pointing to the mirror, took each by the hand, without speaking a syllable. They gazed intently on the polished sable space on which he had directed their attention. Suddenly the surface assumed a new and singular appearance . It is no longer simply reflected the objects placed before it, but, as if it had self-contained scenery of its own, objects began to appear within it, at first in a disorderly, indistinct, and miscellaneous manner, like form arranging itself out of chaos; at length, in distinct and defined shape and symmetry.

Sir Walter Scott


– Sir Walter Scott
The Tale of Misterious Mirror


THE 13
SCHOOLS OF MAGIC
ELEMENTAL AIR
ILLUSION
ENCHANTMENT/ CHARM
ALTERATION
GREATER DIVINATION
ELEMENTAL FIRE
LESSER DIVINATION
ELEMENTAL WATER
CONJURATION/ SUMMONING
INVOCATION/ EVOCATION
NECROMANCY
ELEMENTAL EARTH
ABJURATION



Ravenloft is a land of darkness and macabre fates. While the sinister nature of the Demiplane of Dread may seldom affect the life of a common man, those who dabble in the black arts must confront the machinations of the Mists on a regular basis.

Of Magic and Magicians

Just as the Realms of Terror alter the magical powers of priests, so too do they distort the powers of wizards. The following sections provide a general overview of wizardry in Ravenloft. Descriptions of specific spell effects follow later in this chapter.



Conjuration and Summoning

A wizard who casts certain conjuration or summoning spells may find the results limited by circumstance. A wizard can summon animals and enchanted creatures only if they exist within the domain in which he casts the spell. If the description for a given domain does not indicate which animals live there, assume that the local fauna includes everything from similar habitats in other realms. For ease of reference, Dungeon Masters can assume that the Core domains are similar in ecology to the nations of central and eastern Europe. Thus, a summoning attempt would not bring forth a tiger or elephant in most domains. The Dungeon Master should choose an appropriate creature from the domain.

Ravenloft is cut off from the rest of the multiverse, which creates a problem for wizards who attempt to summon planar creatures. In general, a creature still responds to the summoning, though it is rarely what the wizard intended and often unfriendly, especially when the creature attempts to return home and discovers that it cannot depart from the Demiplane.

Necromancy

Certain spells, particularly those of the school of necromancy, function more effectively in Ravenloft. Wizards should be warned that casting such spells with abandon can affect the caster in the most sinister of ways.

Elementalist

The elementalist does not use newly discovered spells as much as he uses the old spells in a new fashion. Instead of organizing them by school, he thinks in terms of nature's elements: Earth, Water, Air, and Fire. Ravenloft, for all its strange and mysterious twists, does not differ from any other realm in this regard. As such, of all the practitioners of the art, elementalists suffer the fewest changes to their spells in the Land of the Mists.

Metamagicians

Metamagic basically uses spells to affect other spells. This magic holds little concern for the dark powers. Hence, these spells function somewhat normally in Ravenloft. Like elementalists, metamagicians are generally untouched by the ebb and flow of the Mists.

Wild Mages

Wild mages seek to discover and employ the theoretical underpinnings of magic. This breed of sorcerer is as inter- ested in how magic works as he is in using it. They have discovered the secrets of chaos and can use the principles of uncertainty to chart a steady course through the arcane arts. The abilities of wild mages change little in Ravenloft, though the Mists have affected a few of their spells.

It is important to remember that the rules of Ravenloft take precedence over the effects of wild surges. A wild surge can never remove a curse or undo the effects of a failed Ravenloft powers check. It cannot enable a wild mage to magically distinguish good from evil, negate the ability of self-willed undead to disguise themselves mentally, or allow characters to walk the planes. Any wild surge that would detrimentally affect a domain lord has a 50% chance to affect a different target instead. Annoying and beneficial effects of wild surges function normally in Ravenloft.

Altered Wizard Spells

Table 25: Altered Wizard Spells

Chill touch * (1st)
Conjure spell component * (1st)
Detect undead (1st)
Find familiar * (1st)
Metamorphose liquids (1st)
Detect evil/detect good (2nd)
ESP (2nd)
Know alignment/(undetectable alignment) (2nd)
Nahal's nonsensical nullifier (2nd)
Spectral hand * (2nd)
Alternate reality (3rd)
Clairaudience (3rd)
Clairvoyance (3rd)
Feign death * (3rd)
Hold undead (3rd)
Lorloveim's creeping shadow * (3rd)
Monster summoning I (3rd)
Vampiric touch * (3rd)
Contagion * (4th)
Dimension door (4th)
Enervation * (4th)
Locate creature (4th)
Magic mirror (4th)
Mask of death * (4th)
Monster summoning II (4th)
Monster summoning III (5th)
Summon shadow * (5th)
Teleport (5th)
Bloodstone's spectral steed * (6th)
Conjure animals (6th)
Death spell * (6th)
Ensnarement (6th)
Geas (6th)
Lorloveim's shadowy transformation * (6th)
Monster summoning IV (6th)
Reincarnation * (6th)
True seeing (6th)
Banishment (7th)
Bloodstone's frightful joining * (7th)
Control undead * (7th)
Finger of death * (7th)
Monster summoning V (7th)
Shadowcat (7th)
Shadow walk (7th)
Suffocate * (7th)
Teleport without error (7th)
Abi-Dalzim's horrid wilting * (8th)
Horrung's random dispatcher (8th)
Monster summoning VI (8th)
Astral spell (9th)

Remove curse/bestow curse * (4th)
Summon lycanthrope * (4th)
Animate dead * (5th)
Conjure elemental (5th)
Contact other plane (5th)
Dismissal (5th)
Khazid's procurement (5th)
Magic Jar * (5th)
Energy drain * (9th)
Estate transference (9th)
Gate * (9th)
Monster summoning VII (9th)
Succor (reversible) (9th)
Wail of the banshee * (9th)
Wish (9th)

* Could require a Ravenloft powers check

Table 25 lists the common wizard spells with altered effects in Ravenloft. A description of changes to each spell follows the table, supporting the text in the Player's Handbook and the Tome of Magic. For more convenient referencing, the reverse of a spell is listed beside its counterpart (following a slash). If either version of the spell works normally in Ravenloft, it appears in parentheses.

First-Level Spells

Chill Touch: This spell becomes even more deadly when cast in Ravenloft. If the victim fails a saving throw vs. spell, the touch inflicts 2d4 points of damage and drains one point of both Strength and Constitution. If the target makes a successful saving throw, the touch still inflicts 1d4 points of damage and drains one point of Strength.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Conjure Spell Component: This spell cannot retrieve components from outside the domain where it is cast. The wizard does not realize that this is the reason for his spell failure.

Depending upon the type of component being summoned, it may require a Ravenloft powers check.

Detect Undead: In Ravenloft, each undead creature can attempt a saving throw vs. spell to prevent detection. If four or more similar creatures are grouped together, they make a single roll with a -2 penalty. A natural roll of 20 always indicates success. As stated in the Player's Handbook, the spell cannot penetrate stone more than one foot thick (in other words, most castle walls).

Find Familiar: Any wizard may send out a call for a familiar in Ravenloft, but only those of evil alignment are sure to receive what they expect. Wizards of less sinister bents will find their summons answered by creatures far less helpful than they might appear at first.

If a neutral or good wizard casts this spell, the Dungeon Master should roll on Table 26 to determine the nature of the creature summoned. No matter what the result, the creature is actually a pseudo-familiar as described in the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III.

Table 26: Good or Neutral Familiars

1d8 Roll	Familiar Summoned
1	Cat, House
2	Cat, Wild
3	Crow or Raven
4	Owl
5	Toad
6	Rat
7	Viper
8	None

Should an evil character cast such a spell in Ravenloft, the Dungeon Master should roll on the Table 27 to determine what creature (if any) answers his summons.

Table 27: Evil Familiars

1d8 Roll	Neutral Evil	Lawful Evil	Chaotic Evil
1	Bat, Sentinel	Bat, Sentinel	Bat, Sentinel
2	Dog, Death	Imp, Assassin	Familiar, Undead

3	Familiar, Pseudo-	Bat, Night Hunter	Imp, Mephit (Fire)
4	Wolf, Worg	Gremlin, Mite	Gremlin
5	Bat, Sentinel	Imp	Gremlin, Galltrit
6	Imp, Mephit (Mist)	Boowray	Imp, Quasit
7	Rat, Giant	Cat, Midnight	Baobhan Sith
8	None	None	None

No matter what the alignment of the caster, such intimate contact with the fabric of Ravenloft can have a corrupting effect upon the wizard. Because of this, casting a find familiar spell in the Demiplane of Dread requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Metamorphose Liquids: This spell is unchanged in Ravenloft. While this spell can certainly change water into blood, the artificially created blood lacks a vital component of the owner's life force; thus, nosferatu and other blood-drinking creatures derive no sustenance from the metamorphosed liquid. If a vampiric creature drinks blood made with this spell, the meal does not slake his thirst and causes him to vomit up his offensive meal 1d4 turns later. In fact, any evil, magical creature that sustains itself solely on fluids from a living creature suffers the same effects that the vampire does, though normal creatures can still draw nourishment from water and other fluids created by this spell.

Second-Level Spells

Detect Evil/Detect Good: No one can magically detect evil in Ravenloft. This spell and its reverse, detect good, simply do not function.

ESP: Unlike undead in other realms, unliving creatures in Ravenloft with "low" Intelligence or better can choose to project false thoughts to those who use mental powers on them (though a creature unaware or caught by surprise cannot project its thoughts). Therefore, the *ESP* spell seldom captures the true thoughts of the creature. The creature usually projects safe, friendly, and reassuring thoughts. Wizards do not know about this spell's altered effects when they cast it.

At the Dungeon Master's discretion, an evil creature may choose to project its true thoughts. Sensing thoughts so horrid will almost always require the caster to attempt a madness check.

Know Alignment: As usual, the target of this spell gets a saving throw to avoid detection. Failure indicates that the spell reveals whether the target has a chaotic, neutral, or lawful alignment; it never detects good or evil alignments.

Nahal's Nonsensical Nullifier: This spell scrambles detection spell results. In Ravenloft, only lawful and chaotic tendencies can be detected. After this spell has scrambled the detected alignment, the lawful and chaotic portions are still the only parts of the alignment reported.

Spectral Hand: This necromantic spell lasts twice as long in Ravenloft. Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Third-Level Spells

Alternate Reality: The dark powers hold sway over reality in the Demiplane. As a result, mechanics unique to Ravenloft are largely unaffected by this spell. Fear, horror, madness, and powers checks cannot be changed from failed rolls into successful ones (though the Dungeon Master can feign rerolling them). However, the secondary die rolls determining the precise results of these failed checks can be rerolled.

For example, if a character who fails a horror check ends up obsessed with the horrific scene casts this spell to get a new horror check roll, the rerolled horror check automatically fails (although the Dungeon Master rolls a die to fool the player).

If that same character casts the spell to affect the result of the horror check, however, he might end up with an aversion rather than an obsession.

Clairaudience: Normally, this spell allows the caster to hear noises in a familiar or obvious place. A "familiar" place is one that the wizard has visited personally. Verbal descriptions and viewing through spells or pictures do not make a place completely familiar, so the wizard will have only a 50% chance to make the spell work. The Dungeon Master should roll once per location; if the wizard is unsuccessful, future attempts will also fail unless he gathers more information.

An "obvious" place denotes one directly connected to the scene before the caster. If the wizard sees a door, he can cast the spell on the other side of the door. He cannot cast it around the corner and through the door, however.

Clairaudience normally creates an invisible sensor that can be magically dispelled. In Ravenloft, the spell forms a visible, ghostly ear of normal size. If detected, the ear can be dispelled, or the parties involved can adjust their speech to compensate.

Magical attacks that depend upon sound affect the caster normally if he hears it via his clairaudiance spell. Thus, if the sensor is within range, a banshee could feasibly kill the caster with her wail.

This spell can reach across only a single Mist-bound region, which may include more than one domain (such as the Core or a Cluster). However, the spell does not work in the Mists themselves, as they distort location and distance. The caster is not immediately aware of any of these changes.

Clairvoyance: This spell is restricted like Clairaudience, above. It allows the caster to view things only in a familiar or obvious location. If the area does not meet those qualifications, the spell has a 50% chance of failing. The spell can reach only across a single Mist-bound area and does not work directly in the Mists.

In Ravenloft, the formerly invisible sensor created by this spell becomes a visible, ghostly eye of normal size. A gaze attack on the sensor also affects the caster. For example, a vampire can charm a wizard watching with a clairvoyance spell.

Feign Death: The caster of this spell must make a Ravenloft powers check.

Hold Undead: Undead monsters strongly resist this type of magic in Ravenloft. All undead - even mindless ones - can avoid its effects with a successful saving throw vs. spell. Self-willed undead each gain an additional +2 bonus to their saving throws. This spell cannot affect domain lords.

Lorloveim's Creeping Shadow: This spell animates the caster's shadow in order for him to see through its eyes and hear through its ears. Manipulating the stuff of shadows is dangerous in Ravenloft, as these patches of darkness sometimes take on a life of their own.

The Dungeon Master should secretly roll a saving throw vs. spell for the caster on the round the spell is cast. If it succeeds, nothing unusual happens, and the spell functions normally. The caster will probably not know that it was even possible for something unusual to happen. If the saving throw fails, then his shadow animates. Once animated, it remains so until killed, and the caster loses his real shadow until that time. Beings without shadows seem rather spooky, so nonplayer characters are likely to think the worst of a character without one.

In campaigns not utilizing the Requiem rules accessory, the character's shadow transforms into the monster of the same name (as described in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome). Such a monster will seek to kill the caster, but not always immediately. It will more likely follow him around and wait for the best opportunity. The shadow defends itself if attacked, but will willingly flee if it is in danger of being destroyed.

If the campaign does utilize the Requiem, rules, then a much more fiendish transformation occurs. When the shadow animates, it promptly takes control of the character's living shell and shunts the hero's life force into the animated shadow. The player should use the Requiem rules to convert the character into this new form. Then, the creature in possession of the wizard's body will attempt to kill the shadow player character. Further, the creature will attempt to enlist the help of other player characters in its dread task.

Since the other players might detect the transpossession immediately, Dungeon Masters should have the player keep control of that character's body for the first day. That night, the shadow monster runs away with the body. The player now plays a shadow in search of its body.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Monster Summoning I: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. The summoned creatures vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Vampiric Touch: Ravenloft enhances the effects of this spell. For every die of damage inflicted, the victim permanently loses 1 hit point unless a priest successfully casts a *restoration* spell on him within twenty-four hours. For example, if a 7th-level wizard touches a warrior with this spell, the warrior would suffer 3d6 points of damage, three points of which would be lost permanently unless he convinces someone to cast a restoration spell on him within a day.

The caster of this spell must make a powers check.

Fourth-Level Spells

Contagion: The caster of this spell must make a Ravenloft powers check.

Dimension Door: This spell cannot transport the caster across a domain border.

Enervation: This spell is quite deadly in Ravenloft. Each level drained from the victim also drains 1 hit point permanently. For example, if a succession of these spells causes a character to lose three levels, he also loses 3 hit points permanently. Only a restoration spell cast within twenty-four hours of the enervation attack can restore those lost points.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Locate Creature: This spell is unable to cross the Misty Border that separates one domain from another. This spell cannot detect a creature on the other side of such a border, even if within normal range. Indeed, if this spell were cast by a wizard looking across a domain border directly at the creature, he would still not detect it.

The lord of a domain can always attempt a saving throw vs. spell to avoid being discovered by this spell. If the saving throw succeeds, the lord also instantly knows the location of the person who cast it.

Magic Mirror: Although it does not function in the Mists themselves, the magic mirror can view any location within a single domain. The mirror still acts as a scrying device, but a ghostly mirror with the caster's face appears at the location being viewed by the caster. A gaze attack directed at this image affects the caster normally. The caster does not immediately

know of these changes, as he cannot see this ghostly image.

Mask of Death: This spell normally enables the caster to alter the features of a dead body to resemble another person. In Ravenloft, adventurers should not dabble so readily with the dead. The caster must roll a saving throw vs. death magic; failure indicates that he takes on the features of the dead body. If the body is in an obvious state of decay, then the caster looks like a zombie. The spellcaster is unaware of this change, so unless he looks in a mirror or someone tells him, he will notice nothing.

If a corpse is given the appearance of someone else who is also dead and is then subjected to a raise dead or similar spell, the corpse becomes a wight, animated by the spirit of the dead person it resembles. The wight is unlikely to be pleased at returning from the dead in someone else's body, even if it does look like its own.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Monster Summoning II: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. These summoned monsters vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Remove Curse/Bestow Curse: Remove curse works poorly in Ravenloft, where its duration is limited rather than permanent. The target of this magic must make a successful saving throw vs. spell to temporarily be rid of a curse; the duration of relief is only one turn per level of the spellcaster.

Curses are very powerful in Ravenloft (see Chapter Twelve). The stronger the curse, the less likely it is that a mere spell can suspend it. Use Table 28 to find the saving throw modifier for the power of the curse.

Bestow curse works as described, but it requires a Ravenloft powers check with the modifiers given in the table below.

Table 28: *Remove Curse/Bestow Curse* Penalties

Curse	Saving Throw Penalty	Powers Check Penalty
Embarrassing	0	0%
Frustrating	-1	+1%
Troublesome	-2	+2%
Dangerous	-3	+3%
Lethal	-6	+6%

Summon Lycanthrope: For this spell to work, the caster and the lycanthrope must be in the same domain. This spell can call creatures under the control of the domain lord, but they are utterly free of the caster's control and will do the bidding of their true master as soon as they arrive. This spell can summon a lycanthrope domain lord only if he allows it. Upon arrival, the magical circle does not bind him, although he may pretend for a time that it does.

Once summoned, a lycanthrope has a chance to break the imprisoning circle. In Ravenloft, the chance is 30%, plus (or minus) the difference in level/Hit Dice between the caster and the creature.

Summoning a lycanthrope requires a Ravenloft powers check. Otherwise, the spell works as described in the Tome of Magic.

Fifth-Level Spells

Animate Dead: This spell works almost too well in Ravenloft. Normally the caster can animate a number of skeletons or zombies approximately equal to his level in Hit Dice. When priests cast this spell in Ravenloft, however, they animate twice the usual amount (using the regular formula, but doubling the result.) The caster can add as many Hit Dice to the animated monsters as he desires, as long as the total does not exceed twice his own level.

Dungeon Masters should keep in mind that the Hit Dice of an undead creature affects its resistance to turning. Further, those creatures whose Hit Dice exceed the caster's level can attempt a saving throw vs. spell to break free of control.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Conjure Elemental: The dark powers severely restrict access to other planes. Thus, a conjured elemental cannot leave unless it finds a normal exit. In addition, the caster has a 20% chance of conjuring a Ravenloft elemental with this spell (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II).

All summoned creatures are more difficult to control on the Demiplane. On the first round of summoning, the creature can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty; success indicates that the creature avoids the control of the caster and can act freely. Generally, this means that it will seek to return to its home dimension. As soon as it becomes clear that it is trapped, it might try to destroy the wizard that imprisoned it.

Contact Other Plane: This spell opens a conduit to the domain lord, lasting one round for every two levels of the caster. The caster knows only that he has contacted a powerful, malevolent force. The lord need not answer truthfully; in fact, he does not have to answer at all. The Dungeon Master should role-play any conversation between the wizard and the domain lord.

No attacks can be made through this contact, but the lord discovers the caster's approximate location (within two miles). Unless he has reason to do so automatically, there is a 50% chance that the lord will dispatch minions to seek out and attack the wizard.

Contacting a mind so filled with evil can easily drive a person insane. The caster might be overwhelmed by the pure malevolence of the mind he has contacted, resulting in a madness check. The base chance of such a check being required is 30%, minus 5% for every point of Intelligence that the caster has over 15. In addition, the domain lord can willingly project thoughts of evil and despair at the caster. If he does this, the chance of requiring the madness check doubles.

Dismissal: The Mists do not allow such an easy exit from Ravenloft. If the target creature does not want to be dismissed at all, it can attempt a saving throw vs. spell to avoid being sent away. If the saving throw fails or the creature wishes to leave, the creature has a 50% chance of being teleported to some random location in the Demiplane (but not across closed domain borders). Otherwise, the spell has no effect.

Khazid's Procurement: This spell will not enable a gate to be opened beyond the borders of the domain in which the caster is currently located. If the ingredient to be procured does not exist in that domain, the spell fails.

Magic Jar: This spell undergoes a small but deadly change in Ravenloft. If the host's body is slain, the caster does not necessarily return to the magic jar. The caster must make a successful saving throw vs. death magic or be bound to the corpse. If the roll succeeds, the spell works normally. If it fails, the wizard becomes an undead monster occupying the host's

body.

In campaigns utilizing the Requiem rules, the guidelines presented there should be used to create the undead player character. If those rules are not available, the corpse of the host lies in peaceful death for a full day; then, if the corpse is still relatively whole, it animates with the caster's life force. If the corpse is not relatively whole, the wizard dies. "Relatively whole" means the head and torso are generally intact. The caster, when undead, retains the mental powers he had in life and the physical abilities of the host's body, except for those powers antithetical to an undead state - such as healing touch, plant growth, or protection from evil.

In addition, the caster receives the usual powers of an undead creature. He is immune to sleep, charm, and other mind-control spells and never needs sleep, food, drink, or even air. He also is immune to cold-based damage. Depending on the Hit Dice of the host body, the subject also receives powers listed in Table 29.

Table 29: Magic Jar Special Powers

Hit Dice	Powers
4 or fewer	None
5-7	Energy draining touch
8-11	Regeneration (1 hit point per round)
11 +	Aura of fear (forty foot radius)

The special powers in Table 29 are cumulative. Hence, a 12 HD monster would enjoy all three powers. The aura of fear automatically affects creatures with less than 4 Hit Dice, but those with 4 to 6 Hit Dice can attempt a saving throw vs. spell to avoid making the fear check. Monsters with greater than 6 Hit Dice are not affected.

The caster's original body also becomes an undead creature under the control of the undead host. This creature is weaker than the one created from the host's body, having only half as many Hit Dice as the caster had levels, up to a maximum of 10 Hit Dice. Table 91: Turning Undead (Cleric) can help determine what type of creature is created. For example, a 13th-level wizard would become a 6 HD monster. According to the table, a 6 HD undead monster is a wraith, but the Dungeon Master can choose a different undead creature of the same Hit Dice if desired.

The magic jar spell undergoes another important change in Ravenloft. The life force of the host, contained in the *magic jar*, does not depart when the caster's own life force is bound to the host's body. Instead, the host's life force becomes trapped in the jar, held there by the dark powers themselves. The powers of this trapped life force remain unknown, but many think the force festers and grows within its prison, attaining powers that allow it to reach out from the jar and perhaps eventually escape. Destroying the magic jar usually kills the life force within it as well.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Monster Summoning III: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. Summoned monsters vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Summon Shadow: Each shadow can make a saving throw vs. spell upon arriving, with a -2 penalty. If the roll succeeds, the shadow breaks free from the caster's control.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Teleport: This spell cannot transport characters across the border of a domain or out of Ravenloft.

Sixth-Level Spells

Bloodstone's Spectral Steed: The sight of the spectral steed forces 0-level humans and other nonclassed characters to roll a fear check. Anyone within thirty feet must also roll a horror check. The caster does not have to roll either of these checks since he summoned the creature.

Upon casting this spell, the wizard must roll a saving throw vs. spell. If it fails, the creature solidifies and becomes an undead creature. Visually it is indistinguishable from the spell form, but it is, in effect, one of Strahd's skeletal steeds (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II), capable of flying at a rate of 24 (C). The beast still looks like a skeletal vulture, so the hoof/hoof/bite attack translates to a claw/claw/beak attack in this form. It retains an animal-level intelligence, but the wizard cannot control it.

The undead creature has only one goal - to kill the wizard who caused its tortured existence. However, it will not attack immediately if the party appears to be strong and well prepared. Instead, it will flee and follow the wizard at a distance, for years if necessary, awaiting the perfect moment to strike. Of course, it immediately defends itself if attacked.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Conjure Animals: Only animals native to the domain or region in which the spell is cast can be created. Otherwise, the spell works normally. If the lord of the domain can normally control the type of creature conjured, he retains that influence.

Death Spell: The target of this spell has a 10% chance to return from the grave to torment his killer. It takes exactly seventy-two hours from the time that the spell is cast for such a character to rise again.

In campaigns utilizing the *Requiem* accessory, the rules presented there should be used to determine the new statistics for the character. In campaigns not using those rules, the following guidelines can be used: If the corpse is relatively whole, the character will become a wight, but if the character's body has been destroyed, the spirit of the dead man will return as a wraith. In either case, the undead creature will have half the Hit Dice of its living incarnation.

At the Dungeon Master's discretion, unusually powerful personalities may become other types of undead.

However, this spell cannot create any creature more powerful than a vampire.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Ensnarement: This spell normally ensnares a creature from another plane and transports it to the caster. According to the spell, the creature can leave after performing one service. Since Ravenloft does not allow visitors to escape so easily, the creature cannot leave the Demiplane unless it finds its own exit. The summoned creature will unlikely not appreciate these circumstances.

This spell can even summon a creature from within the Demiplane itself. Instead of creating a momentary conduit to another plane, it creates a gate near the lord of the domain, who can choose to send a minion in response to the spell (or answer it himself if the spell is cast within his domain). The percentage chance of this equals the level of the caster.

It is also more difficult to control a summoned creature in Ravenloft. The creature's base chance of escaping a warding circle

doubles, so a hand-drawn circle has a 40% base chance to fail and inlaid or carved circles have a 20% base chance of failure. (The creature never has less than a 5% chance to escape.)

Geas: Normally, a target who does not complete the caster's command suffers cumulative penalties to all saving throws. In Ravenloft, the caster can also assign another additional punishment for not fulfilling the assigned geas. The punishment cannot be too severe or life threatening, but it must slowly worsen each day that the quest is ignored. Likewise, following the geas should gradually cancel the punishment. For example, a character might shrink 10% in height each day he violates the quest. Each day the character returns to the geas, he regains one day of shrinkage.

Lorloveim's Shadowy Transformation: This spell is especially dangerous to cast in the Demiplane of Dread. To willingly dabble in the realm of shadow is risky, for the wizard never knows when the shadow might take on a life of its own. When the spell expires, the creature transformed into a shadow must roll a saving throw vs. spell. If the creature was unwillingly transformed into a shadow, it gets a +4 bonus to this saving throw. If the roll fails, the creature becomes a shadow fiend (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II). The shadow fiend attempts to flee the scene, but it then follows the wizard for months if necessary, awaiting the ideal moment to attack.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Monster Summoning IV: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. These summoned monsters vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Reincarnation: In Ravenloft this spell may actually reincarnate a person as an undead creature. The chance of this occurring is 1% per level of the caster. If this happens, the person becomes a monster type with Hit Dice equal to his former experience level. This spell cannot create undead more powerful than vampires.

In campaigns utilizing the *Requiem*, rules, characters raised as undead should be converted according to the guidelines presented in that accessory.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

True Seeing: This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, with the following clarifications:

- The description of this spell states that the caster sees through illusions and "apparitions". This does not include ghosts or other intangible beings, who are real while not physical. Undead creatures of this ilk do not appear differently under this spell. If they look like normal people, this spell usually does not change the caster's perception.
- Enchanted creatures include conjured or summoned creatures and beings under some sort of controlling spell such as charm or geas. These spell effects are revealed by true seeing. Vampires and lycanthropes control animal troops through enchantment, but they do not control subservient creatures of their own kind this way.
- Polymorphed creatures and items become apparent. A lycanthrope in animal form is not considered polymorphed, nor is a vampire or similar creature with natural shapechanging abilities. As a general rule, if changing shape is part of the creature's nature, this spell (when cast in Ravenloft) does not reveal the change. In order to qualify as polymorphed, a transformation must involve spellcasting.

Seventh-Level Spells

Banishment: The dark powers do not permit easy egress from the Demiplane of Dread. Any creature targeted by this spell makes its saving throw with a +4 bonus. If the roll fails, the creature is teleported to a random location within Ravenloft (but not across closed domain borders). This spell cannot affect a domain lord.

Bloodstone's Frightful Joining: While most necromantic spells work better in Ravenloft, this one does not. The will of the undead is greater here than on most planes, providing them with greater resistance to this spell. Self-willed undead creatures get a +2 bonus to the saving throw, and the necromancer must be in the same domain as the undead monster that he is attempting to join.

Actually, the necromancer would probably be better off failing this spell. Joining with an undead monster is cause for a Ravenloft powers check. Also, once the caster's mind controls in the undead body, the monster continuously assaults the wizard's mind with ghastly thoughts. During the joining, the necromancer must attempt a madness check every hour. Failure means that the monster's mind overcomes that of the wizard, and the wizard's mind returns to his body. Once there, the player must attempt a system shock roll, as stated in the spell description. If the wizard still lives, he is an insane slave completely under the control of the undead creature.

Control Undead: In Ravenloft, all undead (even those with 3 Hit Dice or less) can make a saving throw to resist control. Those with more than 3 Hit Dice add a +2 bonus to this roll. This spell cannot affect domain lords.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Finger of Death: A small change occurs when this spell is cast in Ravenloft. After three days, the victim's body automatically animates as a juju zombie. If the caster is present when this happens, each zombie must attempt a saving throw vs. spell. Failure means the creature falls under the caster's control; success means that it despises the caster and seeks to destroy him. If the caster is not present when a ju-ju zombie becomes animated, the creature automatically seeks out and attempts to kill the caster.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Limited Wish: This spell functions only if the dark powers allow it to. The dark powers usually grant the wish, but they always try to pervert the caster's intent. Thus, this spell rarely performs as desired when cast in Ravenloft. When evil characters wish for something dark and twisted, they have a 50% chance of receiving their wish exactly as requested (in which case the wish is already perverted).

A wish intended to allow the caster to escape from Ravenloft, destroy a domain lord, or otherwise violate one of the basic tenets of the land fails utterly. Also, any spell used for evil requires a powers check.

Monster Summoning V: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. These summoned monsters vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Shadowcat: Upon casting this spell, the wizard must roll a saving throw vs. spell. If he fails the check, the cat becomes a slow shadow. The slow shadow tries to kill the wizard who summoned it, though it may flee if threatened and follow the wizard at a distance.

Slow Shadow: AC 8; MV 12; HD 4; THACO 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; SA slow (with successful hit, shadow attaches to victim and automatically slows victim as per spell; victim loses another 1d4 points every round until either the victim dies or the shadow dies or is driven off), surprise (-6 penalty to opponents' surprise rolls); SD not affected by cold, lightning, hold, charm, or weapons of less than +2 enchantment, 90% invisible in dusk or torch light, 50% undetectable in full daylight; SW haste spell drives 2d10 unattached slow shadows away; SZ M (4-6'); Int low; AL CE; XP 650.

Notes: A person killed by slow shadow becomes a lesser slow shadow in one turn unless remove curse is cast on the body. Lesser slow shadows must stay within forty feet of either the location of their transformation or another slow shadow.

Shadow Walk: No one can escape Ravenloft by casting a simple spell like this. However, since the Demiplane of Shadow appears to be strongly linked to the Demiplane of Dread, this spell still enables the caster to walk from place to place as described in the Player's Handbook. Still, the caster seems to be tethered to Ravenloft and cannot fully enter the Demiplane of Shadow. The caster is held in the icy clutches of Ravenloft's dark powers, which let him stray no more than an arm's length from the land.

Suffocate: Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Teleport Without Error: This spell works normally, except it cannot transport the character out of Ravenloft or through closed domain borders. Also, because some areas of Ravenloft change quite often, the teleporter might not be as familiar with the place as he believes.

Eighth-Level Spells

Abi-Dalzim's Horrid Wilting: Any person killed by this spell must make a saving throw vs. death magic. If the roll fails, the creature becomes a mummy bent on destroying its creator. However, the mummy usually does not attack immediately, as it has years in which to plan its revenge upon the wizard.

A wizard who uses this spell against another person must attempt a Ravenloft powers check.

Hornung's Random Dispatcher: Ravenloft is all but closed to interplanar spells, so this spell does not work.

Monster Summoning VI: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. These summoned monsters vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Ninth-Level Spells

Astral Spell: Ravenloft does not connect with the Astral Plane, so this spell does not work here.

Energy Drain: The caster of this spell must make a Ravenloft powers check.

Estate Transference: Since Ravenloft is not in the Prime Material Plane, this spell does not function here. Additionally, the Mists do not allow escape from the Demiplane via spells.

Gate: This spell works normally, with one restriction. The summoned creature cannot automatically return to its place of origin. It must find it own exit from the Demiplane, just like any other being. This is frequently enough to provoke the creature to seek revenge on the caster.

Trying to summon an evil creature with this spell requires the caster to make a Ravenloft powers check.

Monster Summoning VII: This spell can summon only monsters native to the region in which it is cast. Refer to the descriptions of the particular domain to determine exactly what type of creatures respond to the summons. These summoned monsters vanish when the spell expires.

Summoned monsters are very resistant to control in Ravenloft, and they can attempt a saving throw vs. spell with a -2 penalty to avoid the summons. If the summoned monsters are minions of the lord, the creatures still appear, but the lord retains control.

Succor: Neither this spell nor its reverse can transport anyone or anything out of Ravenloft or across closed domain borders.

Wail of the Banshee: Like other spells from the school of necromancy, this one actually works better in Ravenloft. Normally it has a range of thirty feet, but in the Demiplane of Dread it has a range of sixty feet. Any female - not necessarily an elf - killed by this spell becomes a banshee, and these created banshees owe no loyalty to the wizard who created them. In fact, they will almost certainly try to wreak vengeance upon him.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Wish: This spell functions only if the dark powers allow it to. The dark powers usually grant the wish, but they always try to pervert the caster's intent. Thus, this spell rarely performs as desired when cast in Ravenloft. When evil characters wish for something dark and twisted, they have a 50% chance of receiving their wishes exactly as requested (in which case the wish is already perverted).

A wish intended to allow the caster to escape from Ravenloft, destroy a domain lord, or otherwise violate one of the basic tenets of the land fails utterly. Similarly, any spell used for evil requires a powers check.

New Wizard Spells

To the dull mind all nature is leaden. To the illuminated mind the whole world bums and sparkles with light.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
Journals



The magical arts constantly change, adapting to new circumstances and needs. Wizards, rarely content with what they already know, push the boundaries of arcane knowledge year after year. First among wizards in the Land of the Mists is Lord Strahd von Zarovich, a 16th-level necromancer well schooled in the dark arts. This section reveals a fragment of what Strahd has accumulated.

***Strahd's Baneful Attractor* (Evocation)**
Reversible
Level: 2
Range: 60 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 2 rounds/level
Casting Time: 2
Area of Effect: Special
Saving Throw: Negates

This spell is the reverse of *Hornung's baneful deflector*, but of course, the vampire Count chose to name it after himself rather than credit the upstart Hornung. The spell forms a hemispherical shell identical in form to Hornung's shell. Instead of deflecting spells directed at the target, however, it attracts them. Any spell targeted at an individual within fifteen feet of a creature afflicted by *Strahd's baneful attractor* is redirected to the afflicted creature. If the redirection causes the spell to exceed its range, then it travels the full distance allowed and fizzles out at the edge of its range. This spell does not attract area-affecting or touch spells.

The material component is a few bits of broken glass.

***Augment Undead* (Necromancy)**
Reversible
Level: 3
Range: 40 yards
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn + 1 round/level
Casting Time: 3
Area of Effect: 1 undead creature



Saving Throw: None This spell augments an undead creature's saving throws and resistance to being turned. It can only be cast upon an undead creature with at least 3 fewer Hit Dice than the caster has levels. The undead monster is then considered to be 3 Hit Dice stronger than normal for the purposes of saving throws and turning resistance.

The reverse of this spell, diminish undead, requires the undead creature to make a saving throw, but it can be cast upon any undead, even if its level or Hit Dice exceed the caster's level. If the saving throw fails, the undead creature is turned as if it were 3 Hit Dice lower than its true value. Neither of these spells is cumulative with multiple castings.

The material component is a piece of clothing from any undead creature, which can be reused indefinitely. Casting *augment undead* requires a Ravenloft powers check.

***Ground Fog* (Invocation)**
Level: 3
Range:0
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 hour/level
Casting Time: 1 turn
Area of Effect: One 50-foot x 50-foot square/level
Saving Throw: None

This spell creates a ground fog or mist that rises only knee high on a normal human (about two feet). The mist fills an area defined by the spellcaster, laid out in 50-foot by 50-foot squares. The first square must be centered on the caster, but the others can be laid out in any pattern as long as every square shares a complete border with another square. The fog fills only the level or floor where the caster stands; it cascades downward but evaporates after a few feet.

The fog swirls mysteriously, so an invisible character moving through the fog does not create enough of a stir to reveal his presence more readily than normal. Also, the fog almost completely obscures the ground beneath. A *detect magic* spell will reveal an aura of invocation.

This spell may seem innocuous, but to a vampire like Strahd von Zarovich it is a deviously simple trap. His gaseous form is indistinguishable from the fog. In effect, the vampire can rise out of the fog for a surprise attack or materialize, hidden by the fog cover, and strike at passing legs. Undead minions can easily do the same.

The material component of the spell is a pinch of lamb's fleece.

***Corpse Whisper* (Necromancy)**
Level: 4
Range: Special
Components: S, M
Casting Time: 4
Duration: Special, up to 1 day
Area of Effect: 1 undead creature
Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the caster to transmit a message to an undead creature. The message forms in the mind of the creature, in the natural voice of the caster. A caster who currently controls the undead target does not need a line of sight. The caster cannot necessarily read the mind or thoughts of the undead creature.

Only self-willed undead recipients not under the current control of the caster can disobey the command. All self- willed

undead can do as they please, but fear of their master usually spurs them into immediate obedience.

The spell establishes a link with the undead creature, enabling the caster to send up to half as many one-round, one-sentence messages as he has levels (rounded down). For example, a 9th-level caster could send four messages to an undead creature, each message requiring a single round to send and consisting of a single sentence. If no commands are sent, the spell wears off in twenty-four hours.

Although the creature must be within forty feet of the wizard when he casts the spell, the creature can then travel up to a mile away and still receive commands. As one might expect, the spell will not function if the caster and undead minion are in different domains and the borders of either (or any intervening domain) close.

The material component of this spell is the tongue of a dead man. Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

***Eyes of the Undead* (Necromancy)**
Level: 4
Range: 30 yards
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 4
Duration: 1 hour/level
Area of Effect: 1 body or undead creature
Saving Throw: Negates

This spell can be cast upon any dead or undead body, size S or larger. Once cast, it forges a link between the wizard and the cadaver, allowing him to see and hear anything that the corpse can.

The caster cannot control the undead creature through this spell, but must rely upon the creature's orders and instincts to provide the appropriate views. The more self- willed and intelligent the undead, the better the chance of seeing or hearing something useful. If the undead creature willingly serves the necromancer, it gets no saving throw. A dead body receives no saving throw.

Although the caster must be within thirty yards of the target when he casts the spell, the creature can travel up to one mile away and still transmit what it sees and hears. The spell ceases to work if the caster and creature are in different domains and the borders of either (or any intervening domain) close.

The material components for this spell are the eye and ear of a dead man. Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

***Mimic Mortal* (Necromancy)**
Level: 4
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 2
Duration: 1 turn + 4 rounds/level
Area of Effect: 1 undead creature
Saving Throw: Negates

This is a very powerful spell in the hands of a vampire wiz- ard. The caster can cause an undead creature to lose some of his vulnerabilities in exchange for some of his powers. In effect, the creature simulates a mortal for a short time.

The caster chooses how many vulnerabilities and powers to cancel out, but not which ones. He can choose a maximum of

one vulnerability per two levels of experience.

Table 30 lists the vulnerabilities and powers affected by this spell in order. If a particular type of undead creature does not have the listed vulnerability or power, skip to the next entry. In all cases, one vulnerability is sacrificed for each power given up. The least valuable vulnerabilities are sacrificed first, but the most valuable powers go with them. In general, an undead creature desiring to masquerade as human will attempt to exchange as many vulnerabilities and powers as possible.

Table 30: *Mimic Mortal* Effects

Vulnerability Masked	**Power Sacrificed**
Deathly pallor[1]	Energy/ability draining
Allergens[2]	Special weapon to hit
No reflection, etc.	Gaze attacks
Warding[3]	Shape changing
Barriers[4]	Immunity[5]
Holy water/symbol	Summoning[6]
Sunlight	Abilities[7]
Turning	Movement Powers[8]

[1] *Deathly pallor* includes things like a lack of body heat, pale skin, and such.
[2] *Allergens* are things that can be used to keep the creature at bay, like garlic or wolfsbane.
[3] *Warding* includes supernatural prohibitions like a vampire's inability to enter a home without being invited to do so.
[4] *Barriers* are physical things which the creature cannot cross, like running water or a line of rose petals.
[5] *Immunity* includes all resistances to things like charm or sleep spells.
[6] *Summoning* includes all abilities to call forth natural or supernatural creatures.
[7] *Abilities* refers to all ability scores which are greater than 17. Any such score immediately falls to 15.
[8] *Movement powers* include spider climbing, flying, passing through walls, and other spell-like abilities.

***Neverending Nightmare* (Enchantment)**
Level: 4
Range: 10 feet/level
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round
Duration: Special
Area of Effect: 1 person
Saving Throw: Negates

This spell enables the caster to subject the victim to nightmarish dreams. The spell can be cast at any time, but it remains dormant until the person sleeps. The Dungeon Master should secretly roll a saving throw for the victim when the spell is cast. If the saving throw fails, the victim begins having horrible nightmares the next time he falls asleep. The exact nature of the nightmare differs depending on the unique fears of the individual.

The victim of the nightmare awakens in a cold sweat, gasping for air and clawing at his face. He will not recall the nightmare in any detail, remembering only vague, unspeakable horrors. These nightmares will continue every night until the spell is broken; a simple *remove curse* spell will suffice. Under the scrutiny of a *detect magic* spell, the target radiates an aura of enchantment.

After the first nightmare, the character automatically fails all fear and horror checks until the spell is broken. In each case, the "memory" of the nightmare comes flooding back. The victim becomes convinced that the nightmare predicted the scene

causing the check and that horrible doom will soon follow.

The material component of this spell is a lock of hair from a black horse. Casting this spell warrants a Ravenloft powers check.

***Rain of Terror* (Evocation)**
Level: 4
Range: 1 mile
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 hour + 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 4
Area of Effect: 1 -mile diameter
Saving Throw: None

This spell causes a rainstorm to develop over the next turn. If storm clouds already hang overhead, the rain begins immediately. The spell lasts for one hour plus one turn per level of the caster and covers a circle one mile in diameter.

The caster can choose different forms of rain, within the limits established in **Table 31**. Living creatures that rain down have a 50% chance to survive. Therefore, after a rain of toads, half of them will be alive and hopping around, and the other half will be dead, killed by the impact. None of the animals can harm anyone, however.

Table 31: *Rain of Terror* Effects

Wizard's Level	Type of Rain
7-8	Black, putrid water
9-10	Ash and embers
11-12	Steaming blood
13-14	Frogs or toads
15-16	Dead bats
17-18	Snakes
19+	Spiders

A wizard can opt to call down the substance indicated by his level or opt for a lesser effect. Thus, a 10th-level wizard can cause a rain of putrid water or ash and embers.

***Suppress Lycanthropy* (Alteration)**
Reversible
Level: 4
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 3 rounds/level
Casting Time: 2
Area of Effect: 1 lycanthrope
Saving Throw: Negates

This spell can be used to give the afflicted lycanthrope a temporary reprieve from its curse or as a combat tactic against any type of lycanthrope. Most of these shapechangers are far less powerful in humanoid form. Thus, the spell can either benefit or hinder the target.

If successful, the spell forces the lycanthrope into human form. The creature retains any powers or immunities that its

human form normally grants but remains unable to change shape for the duration of the spell.

Strahd von Zarovich was as interested in the reverse of this spell, *induce lycanthropy*, as its original form. With it he can force a lycanthrope into its animal or man-beast form. Afflicted lycanthropes adopt the bestial mindset that normally overcomes them in this form. However, this spell has no effect on non-lycanthropes.

The material component of this spell is a sprig of wolfsbane. Casting *induce lycanthropy* warrants a Ravenloft powers check.

Feign Undead **(Necromancy)**
Level: 5
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: 1 turn + 1 round/level
Casting Time: 4
Area of Effect: Person touched
Saving Throw: None

This spell allows the caster or any willing person to masquerade as a zombie. The person looks undead, ceases to breathe, and feels no pain or emotion. He also becomes immune to paralysis, poison, and energy- draining attacks. If poison is delivered while under the effects of this spell, it takes effect normally when spell expires. Poisons to which the person was exposed before the casting of the spell, but that have not yet taken effect, can be forestalled, though they will take effect normally after the spell's expiration. Additionally, immunity to pain does not protect the person from harm; he still suffers damage normally. Spells and powers that normally affect undead have no influence over the person, however, which can potentially reveal his true nature.

The person's body looks just like an animated corpse; his skin and flesh change color, shrinking to reveal bones, but his attire does not change. (The person must attend to the state of his clothes separately.) Also, his joints stiffen, causing jerky movement. The person no longer attacks as a player character, but as a normal zombie (see the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome).

Any creature that sees the false zombie assumes that it is real. Unless ordered to do so, real undead creatures will not attack the subject. If the person does something out of character, though, anybody who sees him can probably deduce that things are not as they seem. Nonplayer characters are entitled to a Wisdom check if there is any doubt about their ability to notice the deception.

The material component for this spell is a bit of bone and dirt from a grave. Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Soul Anchor **(Enchantment/Charm)**
Level: 5
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 5
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Saving Throw: Negates

This spell ties a victim's life force to a particular edifice—a building, an estate, a castle, etc. This prevents the victim from leaving that place unless released from the spell. A simple *remove curse* or successful *dispel magic* spell will suffice. The

owner of the building or estate can also negate the spell by granting the target permission to leave. (The owner can be charmed or otherwise forced into this.)

The specified anchor must have clearly defined borders. A grove of trees in the wilderness does not have a clearly definable border and, hence, is an unsuitable place for a soul anchor. Dungeon Masters should note that property lines, if clearly known by both the caster and subject, are acceptable for this purpose.

Strahd's Malefic Meld **(Necromancy)**
Level: 5
Range: Touch
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 5
Area of Effect: Creatures melded
Saving Throw: None

This spell enables the necromancer to create an undead, golemlike monster composed of up to three dead bodies. He can choose these parts from any selection of dead animals, humanoids, or monsters, as long as they span no more than two size categories. For example, he could meld a dog and an elf since one is size S and the other size M. However, he could not meld a house cat and an elf since the cat is size T, which is more than one size category different from the elf. Similarly, the caster could not meld a dog, an elf, and an ogre since they are sizes S, M, and L, respectively. Also, none of the creatures melded together can have more than 5 Hit Dice.

The advantage of the meld is that the caster can use various attributes from whichever of the original creatures used them best, though the monster will always have animal Intelligence. Most attributes are associated with a particular piece of the creature's body, which must be used in the meld. At least one attribute must be taken from each creature in the meld. The created monster will always loyally serve its creator.

The created monster inherits four attributes from the original creatures: Hit Dice, Armor Class, movement rate, and attacks. The monster's Hit Dice determine its THAC0, saving throws, and resistance to turning undead attempts. The caster can derive the monster's movement rates from multiple creatures as long as he chooses only one movement rate per creature per medium (running, swimming, flying, burrowing, etc.).

The caster must transfer the number of attacks per round from a single creature but can give his creation attack forms from any or all of the creatures in the meld. The creature will often have more attack forms than it has attacks per round. Of course, the appropriate body part for the attack form must exist in the meld. Most physical attacks can be retained, including poison, paralysis, web spinning, and breath weapons.

Magical or mental powers do not survive the transition into undeath. This includes gaze attacks, spellcasting, magic resistance, immunity to nonmagical weapons, spell- like abilities, a lycanthrope's cursed bite, etc. However, for each creature in the meld that has a magical or mental power, the undead creation gets one special undead power.

These powers are cumulative and granted in order:

- Need +1 or better magical weapon to hit
- Life energy drain (one level) by touch
- 10% magic resistance

The caster must assign the level drain to a single form of attack, such as the claws in a claw/claw/bite sequence. Note that only a meld of three creatures that all had magical or mental powers creates a monster with magic resistance. Among player

character classes, only spellcasters and psionicists qualify as having special powers for this purpose. Other classes that can cast spells at higher levels, such as rangers and bards, do not qualify.

One of Strahd's favorite melds is a werewolf, large spider, and gargoyle. This foul creature uses the gargoyle's flying movement and the spider's ground movement. (Even though a werewolf is faster than the spider, he can only pick the legs of one of them and therefore cannot have web movement if he uses the lycanthrope's legs). The Hit Dice are drawn from the werewolf, which has 4+3 Hit Dice. The Armor Class of 5 is taken from the gargoyle, as is the number of attacks (4). The creature gets the werewolf's bite and the spider's poison and web-spinning ability.

Because both the gargoyle and the werewolf had magical abilities, the melded creature has the first two undead abilities: weapons immunities and a level-draining horn attack. Visually, the abomination has spider legs, a werewolf body and head, and gargoyle wings and arms.

> **Werewolf/Spider/Gargoyle Meld:** AC 5; MV 6, Fl 15(C), Wb 15; THAC0 15; #AT 4 (claw/claw/bite/ horn); Dmg 1d3/1d3/2d4/1d4; HD 4+3; SA poison bite, webs, level drain; SD need +1 or better magical weapon to hit; SZ M; ML special; Int low; AL CE; XP 3,000.

The material component for this spell is a pinch of powdered doppleganger bone. Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.

***Misty Summons*(Alteration, Invocation)**
Level: 7
Range: 1 mile/level
Components: V, S
Duration: 1 turn/level
Casting Time: 7 rounds
Area of Effect: 30-foot radius
Saving Throw: None

This spell requires a special portal to be built prior to the casting - a doorway or archway of stone. It must be at least three feet wide, but no more than thirty. The materials to build it cost three thousand gold pieces, and the labor takes six months, all of which must be performed by the caster. Once built, the portal looks like any normal arch, as plain or ornate as the caster desires.

When casting the spell, the wizard visualizes a well- known place within range of the spell and in the same domain as the caster. The caster must also be within thirty feet of the portal. Over the next seven rounds, a misty fog coalesces at that distant place and within the portal. Once the fog has been created, the caster no longer needs to concentrate on it. He can dispel it at any time, though he cannot change its position. The fog is magical, with an aura of alteration and invocation, but is otherwise indistinguishable from normal fog.

Any creature stepping into the mist walks out of it through the portal, though anyone seeing the mist forming may, of course, choose to not step into it. If the caster summons the mist over characters already standing there, they have seven rounds to escape. If the characters are sleeping or otherwise immobile, the mists transport them through the portal.

Count von Zarovich has built a misty portal somewhere in his castle, but its location is unknown. Those he summons to his castle rarely return.

***Strahd's Frightful Joining* (Necromancy)**
Reversible
Level: 7

Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: 2 rounds/level
Casting Time: 7
Area of Effect: 1 creature
Saving Throw: Negates and special

This spell is the reverse of *Bloodstone's frightful joining*. The original spell enables the caster to merge his mind with the body of an undead monster. This spell enables an undead creature, such as a vampire or lich, to merge its mind with the body of a living person. Since Strahd von Zarovich is a vampire, this variation is much more useful to him than Bloodstone's original spell.

The caster must target this spell on a living person. A target that is not a human or demihuman receives a +2 bonus to his saving throw vs. spell. If the saving throw succeeds, the undead wizard is forced back into his original body. No system shock roll is necessary. If the target's saving throw fails, the undead wizard joins his mind with the target's body.

While in the target's body, the caster can use all of the victim's special abilities except memorized spells. Meanwhile, the wizard's undead body remains lifeless and vulnerable to attack. Once in the target's body, the wizard can travel any distance as long as he remains in the same domain as his true body.

Once in the body, the undead caster fills the target's mind with ghastly thoughts. At the beginning of each hour during the joining, the mortal target must attempt a madness check. Failure means that the undead caster's mind overcomes that of the victim. No further checks are necessary, and the undead wizard can remain in control of his mortal victim effortlessly for the duration of the spell. A successful madness check means that the undead wizard must roll a saving throw vs. death magic to remain in the body. If the check succeeds, the mental battle goes on. If it fails, the undead creature's mind is cast from the body, and the victim regains control. However, a target who successfully ejects the undead wizard from his body must still roll a horror check.

One interesting side effect of *Strahd's frightful joining* is that while in the mortal body, the caster can do things that he cannot do in his own undead body. For example, a vampiric caster can walk in the sunlight and see his reflection in a mirror. For Strahd, this spell can have very potent ramifications. Of course, the victim is likely to be a raving lunatic when the darklord is through with him, but Strahd cares little about that.

***Allisandro's Binding Curse* (Alteration, Necromancy)**
Level: 9
Range: Special
Components: V, S, M
Duration: Permanent
Casting Time: 3 hours
Area of Effect: 1 creature
Saving Throw: None

In many ways, this spell is an improved version of the *permanency* spell, save that it is specifically designed to be used in the laying of curses. It permits the caster to lay a normally temporary spell upon an individual and make it permanent.

The spell has no linear range limit, but it cannot affect someone outside the domain in which it is cast. If used outside Ravenloft, the victim can be anywhere in the same plane. However, sufficient warding may block this spell.

The spells it can be used in conjunction with are *anti-magic shell, babble, bestow curse, claws of the umber hulk, confuse languages, contagion, emotion, enervation, enlarge, feign death, feign undead, fist of stone, insatiable thirst, irritation,*

levitate, lower resistance, Malec-Keth's flame fist, neverending nightmare, Otto's irresistible dance, reduce, suggestion, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter, and *unluck*. The wizard must actually cast the associated spell during the casting of *Allisandro's binding curse*. None of these spells actually harm the victim, as they become a part of him. For example, *Otto's irresistible dance* does not produce fatigue or prevent the character from sleeping (although the victim will certainly present an odd sight dancing in his sleep). *Malec-Keth's flame* fist will not burn the character's fist, but could inflict harm if the victim tries to scratch an itch with the blazing member.

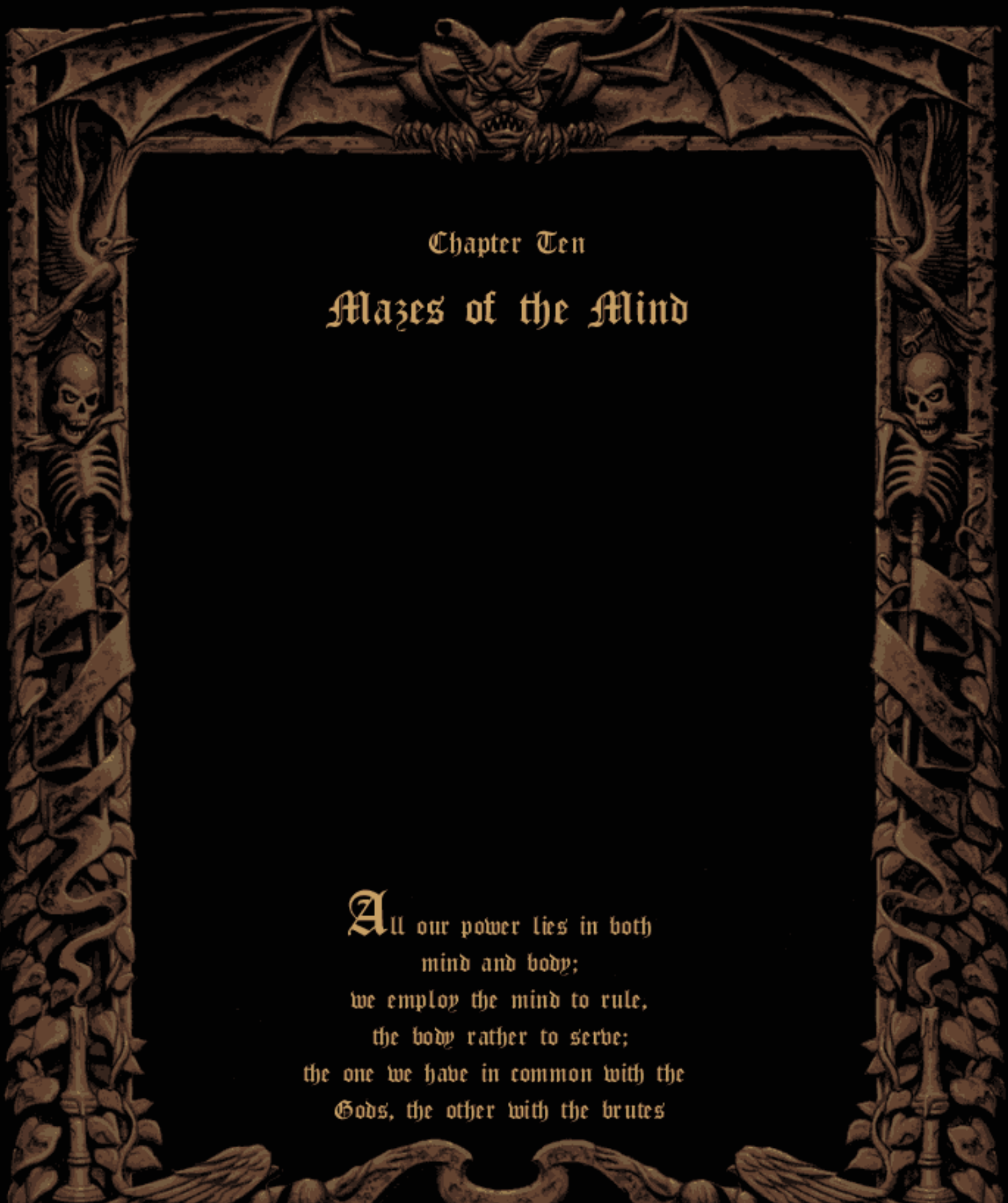
Removing this spell is extremely difficult. A *limited wish* spell will dispel the effects for one day per level of the caster. Only a full *wish* spell can dispel *Allisandro's binding curse*.

In order to cast this spell, the wizard must have some portion of the target's body. This can range from a lock of hair or nail clippings to a severed finger or limb. The spell is long and involved, requiring three hours to cast and involving a great deal of ritual and ceremony. The wizard must have at least two assistants to aid him in the weaving of this dark magic. Neither of them can be under any form of compulsion (such as a threat or magical charm), and both must be fully aware of the act in which they are involved. The assistants need not be spellcasters, however.

At the end of the casting period, the caster must throw the material component into a brazier of hot coals, which consumes it in a flash of sickly light and a boiling cloud of vile-smelling vapor. At that instant, the caster devotes a portion of his own life force to the spell, permanently losing one point of Constitution.

This loathsome spell was created by the Vistana Allisandro Tselikov several hundred years ago. When his tribe learned he had been delving into the dark secrets of necromancy and attempting to harness dark magic, they cast him out. He wandered, alone and broken, eventually becoming the first of Ravenloft's darklings (see the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendices I & II). In isolation, he returned to the research he had been forced to abandon. Eventually, he crafted this spell to exact revenge upon the Vistani for the wrong he felt they had done to him.

Casting this spell requires a Ravenloft powers check.



Chapter Ten

Mazes of the Mind

All our power lies in both
mind and body;
we employ the mind to rule,
the body rather to serve;
the one we have in common with the
Gods, the other with the brutes


– Gaius Sallustius Crispus
The War with Catiline

The budding psionicist who enters Ravenloft may find that his own mind has become the worst of his enemies. As with spells and magical items, psionic powers in the land of the Mists are not always as they seem. The Demiplane of Dread twists and perverts everything that touches it, so even the dark recesses of the mind teem with danger.



The Dungeon Master should keep in mind that the traveling psionicist is not the only creature in this evil place that can slip into the minds of others. Deep under the mountains of Bluetspur, the illithids' power coils and grows, and in the domain of Dementlieu, a master hypnotist battles with a powerful, disembodied brain for control of the all-but-mesmerized populous. Across the Lands of the Mists, madness and thoughts of madness are as prevalent as the vapors of Ravenloft themselves.

Errata and Clarifications

The following section corrects errors from the first printing of The Complete Psionics Handbook. The second and subsequent printings of that supplement contain the correct information.

Psychokinesis Discipline

- The following psychokinetic devotions do not require telekinesis as a prerequisite: animate shadow, control light, control sound, molecular agitation, soften, and telekinesis. All other psychokinetic devotions and sciences have telekinesis as a prerequisite.

Telepathy Discipline

- Telepathic defense modes (intellect fortress, mental barrier, mind blank, thought shield, and tower of iron will) have no prerequisites. All references to prerequisites for these sciences and devotions should be deleted. A character does not need access to the telepathy discipline to learn defense modes.
- The mindlink science is not a prerequisite for the following telepathic devotions: empathy, ESP, identity penetration, incarnation awareness, psychic impersonation, and send thoughts. Mindlink has never been required for ejection, conceal thought, contact, life detection, mind bar, psionic blast, psychic messenger. Mindlink is a prerequisite for all other telepathic sciences and devotions.
- Psychic crush should be a devotion, while psionic blast should be a science.
- All references to the "telepath" power (or prerequisite) should be to the mindlink science instead.
- On page seventy-five, the heading for the fate link science is missing.
- Ego whip and mind thrust both require contact as a prerequisite.

Psionic Monster Listings

- References to the "amplification" power of the brain mole should be changed to psychic drain. Also, "mind" is a telepathic devotion, not a metapsionic one.
- References to the "amplification" power of the intellect devourer should be changed to psychic drain. Also, ectoplasmic form should be listed as a devotion, not a science.

Psionics and the Undead



Undead present more of a threat in Ravenloft than in other worlds, especially to the psionicist. The Demiplane's connections to the Negative Energy Plane are stronger in Ravenloft than on the Prime Material Plane, so those who peer into the minds of the living dead may expose themselves to thoughts too hideous for the mortal mind to grasp.

For the most part, any reference to undead in this chapter indicates self-willed undead unless the text specifically states otherwise. Technically, this refers to those monsters with at least a low Intelligence (5 or higher); when in doubt, the Dungeon Master should check the appropriate entry in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome or other resource. Even if controlled by another creature, an undead being may qualify as self-willed. Such a slave remains "self-willed" for the purposes of looking into its mind, unless the master has specific instructions as to what the slave should or should not think under those circumstances.

In Ravenloft, undead beings can put up a shield of false thoughts that are indistinguishable from real thoughts, even if the psionicist uses *ESP* or similar powers. However, this is a conscious function, not an automatic one. The undead being must deliberately decide to project artificial thoughts, which it normally would do only if it was aware that it was under examination. This deception does not require an action or otherwise hinder the creature. Further- more, the monster can specify exactly what thoughts and emotions it sends out. For the most part, the undead tend to project emotions that they understand, such as anger, hatred, jealously, and so forth. More intelligent monsters are capable of projecting positive emotions such as love and friendship, though they find them distasteful.

Undead are immune to most mental-control powers or mind-altering abilities in Ravenloft, including many of the powers in the telepathic discipline. Unfortunately, this does not mean that the walking dead cannot use psionics or have telepathic powers. A psionic vampire able to use the telepathic discipline is a horrifying opponent indeed!

Altered Sciences and Devotions

Table 32 lists psionic powers from *The Complete Psionics Handbook* that are either altered by the dark powers of Ravenloft or that need further clarification for use in the Demiplane. If the table does not list a particular science or devotion, then it functions normally. Psionic powers sometimes have special effects when the power score or a 20 is rolled; any changes to

these conditions are noted as well in the text on the following pages. As is true of most of Ravenloft's insidious effects, psionicists remain unaware of these new limitations until the results make them painfully obvious.

Table 32: Altered Psionic Powers

Clairsentient Sciences
Aura sight
Clairaudience
Clairvoyance
Object reading
Precognition
Sensitivity to psychic impressions
Clairsentient Devotions
Danger sense
Know location
Poison sense
Radial navigation
Spirit sense
Psychokinetic; Devotions
Animate object
Animate shadow
Control body *
Psychometabolic Sciences
Animal affinity
Death field *
Energy containment
Life draining *
Metamorphosis
Shadow-form *
Psychometabolic Devotions
Absorb disease
Aging *
Cause decay
Cell adjustment
Double pain *
Psychoportive Sciences
Banishment
Probability travel
Summon planar creature
Teleport
Teleport other
Psychoportive Devotions
Astral projection
Dimensional door
Dimension walk
Teleport trigger
Telepathic Sciences
Domination *
Mass domination
Mindlink
Mindwipe
Probe
Telepathic Devotions
Contact
ESP
Identify penetration
Inflict pain *
Life Detection
Truthear
Metapsionic Sciences
Appraise
Aura alteration
Psychic surgery
Ultrablast
Metapsionic Devotions
Psychic drain *
Retrospection
Wrench

* Could require a Raventoft power check

Five major types of changes occur to psionic powers in the Demiplane of Dread:

- Anything psionically summoned or transported into Ravenloft cannot go back automatically. Since most outer-planar creatures know this fact, they are likely to be very angry with the character who summoned them.
- Since the Mists weaken divination, psionicists cannot determine whether people and creatures are good or evil. They can detect only law and chaos.
- If a psionicist uses his powers for evil purposes (or uses evil powers), he must make a powers check. Most necromantic functions and energy-draining powers fall under this rule.
- Any powers that deal with the living dead or necromancy (by assisting or creating undead, not hindering them) function better in Ravenloft.
- The powers of a domain lord always take precedence over those of a psionicist.

Clairsentience

The dark, swirling Mists of Ravenloft obscure the ability to see the truth. Divination spells are weaker, and nothing is quite as frightening as the unknown. In Ravenloft, evil is usually discovered far too late.

These rules hold true for the sciences and devotions of the clairsentient discipline as well. Most supernatural creatures carefully hide their evil thoughts from those who would probe the mind. The Demiplane of Dread grants them the power to put up a false front.

A single glimpse into the depths of a truly foul mind may cost the trespasser his sanity. As the full horror of the creature's evil becomes apparent, the mortal mind may not be able to withstand the shock. A creature always has the option to let direct mental contact occur, and some truly evil beings allow such contact merely to horrify the observer. Any peek into an evil mind requires a horror check (with modifiers appropriate to the degree of evil). Even more vile are those creatures who willingly reveal their dark thoughts, pressing them deep into the observer's mind. Those who peer into such a mind may be required to roll a madness check instead.

Sciences

Aura Sight: This power can never reveal the good or evil portion of a character's alignment. The true evil of a creature or character is hidden in Ravenloft. Like casting the *detect alignment* spell, using this power reveals only lawful or chaotic affiliations.

Clairaudience: A ghostly white, transparent ear appears wherever the psionicist tries to listen- It matches the psioni- cist's ear exactly, including any jewelry worn. Most ears are indistinguishable from one another, but some-like elf ears-are distinctive. This ear is visible to anyone at that location, assuming that they look in its direction. An unsuspecting character might mistake this ear for a supernatural visitation, in which case a fear check (with a +2 bonus) could possibly be required. A character cannot use this power to listen across a domain border.

Sound-based attacks can function through the ghostly ear. For example, if a wolfwere sang in the presence of the psionic ear, the psionicist would have to roll a successful saving throw vs. spell or become lethargic (see the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome). The caster is immune to all other physical, magical, and psionic attacks used through the ear.

> *Power score* - No ghostly ear appears.
> *20* - The entire head of the psionicist floats like a disembodied apparition, definitely requiring a horror check (no bonus). Its features are distinct enough that the character can be identified at a later time.

Clairvoyance: Similar to clairaudience, this power places an eye, ghostly but visible, at the spot where the power is being projected. If the viewer mistakes it for a ghost or other spirit, a fear check might be in order. The color of the eye appears as a watery hue.

The presence of the eye renders the psionicist vulnerable to gaze attacks. For example, a vampire might be able to charm the psionicist by meeting the gaze of the clairvoyant eye. The caster is immune to all other physical, magical, and psionic attacks sent through the eye. 20 - The entire head of the psionicist floats like a disembodied apparition, definitely requiring a horror check (no bonus). Its features are distinct enough that the character can be identified at a later time.

> *Power score* - No visible eye appears.

20 - The character's entire disembodied head appears. Seeing such a sight might very well require a horror check. Its features are clear enough that the character can be identified later.

Object Reading: A character cannot read good or evil alignments with this power. When revealing the previous owner's race, remember that "undead" is not a race, but merely a condition. Examining the Tome of Strahd with this power would reveal that its owner is human, but it does not report the fact that he is also the Demiplane's most deadly vampire. Similarly, a shroud carried by a groaning spirit (banshee) would give off emanations only of being owned by an elf woman.

Power score - The psionicist automatically learns all information from the table, excluding the good/evil portions of the owner's alignment.
20 - The psionicist becomes obsessed with the object and strives to keep it until he can attempt to read it again.

Precognition: Ravenloft clings to its secrets, sharing them with only a chosen few. No one can pierce the veil of the future in the Land of the Mists, with the notable exception of the Vistani. In the case of this psionic power, the most powerful Vistana fortuneteller in the same domain is instantly alerted that a giorgio (non-Vistana) is attempting to view the future. Furthermore, she can force a false vision upon the character if the power score check is failed. The Vistana does not always exercise this option, but if she does, the psionicist cannot distinguish the false vision from a true one.

Power score - No vision comes, but the Vistani are not alerted to the use of the power.
20 - The character sees a scene of his own, or a loved one's, grisly death. This requires a horror check.

Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions: The basic function of this science does not change in Ravenloft.

Power score - The character gains an unusually clear understanding of each event.
20 - An angry spirit (not necessarily a ghost) comes forward and attacks the psionicist. The type of spirit depends upon the object, domain, and the Dungeon Master.

Devotions

Danger Sense: This power actually functions too well in Ravenloft. The dark powers gleefully allow the character to sense all of the horrifying danger around. The character feels a tingling sensation whenever any creature in the same domain thinks about harming the character (even if it does not pose an immediate threat), any time the character is subject to a Ravenloft powers check, and any time the character crosses a domain border or enters the Mists of Ravenloft. In other words, it goes off most of the time.

Power score - The psionicist learns how far away the danger lies.
20 - The psionicist continuously senses danger, even if nobody is plotting to harm him.

Know Location: This devotion functions normally, but the character never learns he is on a Demiplane. This devotion cannot reveal any larger scale information than the name of the domain. It operates normally for smaller scale information, however, such as the name of the town, region, or building.

Power score - The psionicist learns that he is in the Demiplane of Dread, as well as his exact location within.
20 - The question "Where am I?" appears in the mind of the domain lord. The lord has the option to answer it in any way he chooses, or not to answer at all. If he chooses to answer the question, the psionicist cannot distinguish this answer from a normal response.

Poison Sense: Normally, this power functions as one would expect. In the domain of Borca, however, it fails to detect the tainted nature of the food and water in that land.

Radial Navigation: This devotion functions as described, except that the character cannot fix on any point outside of the domain.

Spirit Sense: The term "spirit" does not include any undead with a physical body, only noncorporeal undead. This means that such undead as zombies, wights, vampires, and revenants are not detectable, while ghosts, phantoms, banshees, and the like can be detected. Although revenants are listed in *The Complete Psionics Handbook* as being detectable, this ability cannot detect them in Ravenloft (since they have a physical body).

Spirits have a much stronger aura in Ravenloft, allowing psionicists to sense them at greater distances. The presence of spirits anywhere within sixty yards alerts the character. However, unless he has time to experiment with the power, the psionicist remains unaware of the expanded range. If a spirit being rules the domain, the psionicist using this power constantly senses a "nearby" spirit. This reflects the pervasive influence of the domain lords.

> *Power score* - The psionicist learns how far away the spirit is, but not its direction.
> *20* - The spirit becomes aware of the psionicist's attention. Furthermore, the spirit immediately knows the direction to the character, but not the distance.

Psychokinesis

Most of these powers function normally in the Demiplane. Manipulating objects with the mind does not usually concern the dark powers, so they take little interest in the use of such skills- However, as with any action in the Land of the Mists, if a character uses a psionic ability for evil purposes, a Ravenloft powers check may be necessary.

Sciences

None of these powers function differently in Ravenloft.

Devotions

Animate Object: This devotion functions normally in Ravenloft.

> *Power score* - The animation appears smooth and lifelike.
> *20* - The animated object automatically takes on a life of its own, becoming the home of an animator, as described in the RAVENLOFT Monstrous Compendium Appendix III.

The animator will focus its negative attentions on the creator if at all possible, though it may be quite subtle about this. For instance, an animated puppet might try to win its way into the psionicist's heart, calling him "father" and acting like a helpful companion until the time comes to turn on him.

Animate Shadow: A prudent psionicist must be wary of giving life to anything made of darkness when in Ravenloft, as it may haunt him for as long as he lives.

> *Power score* - The range increases to one hundred yards.
> *20* - The animated shadow absorbs a little of the substance of the Demiplane, becomes the monster of the same name, and seeks to kill the character. It follows him everywhere, lurking just out of sight and waiting for a chance to pounce upon its former master. As long as the monster lives, the character casts no shadow of his own. Any normal person who notices the lack of shadow will assume the worst about the character.

Shadow: THAC0 17; Dmg 1d4+ 1; AC 7; HD 3+ 3; MV 12; SA drains Strength; SD+ 1 weapon needed to hit; MR as undead; SZ M; ML special; XP 650.

Control Body: Taking over another creature's body is not evil in itself, but the potential to abuse the power is great. If the psionicist uses the controlled body for evil or unnecessarily selfish purposes, then the player must roll a Ravenloft powers check. Controlling another creature's body to stop it from attacking or to save it from imminent danger is not considered selfish or evil. Using the power to put a quick and painless end to an evil creature is also safe. However, making it dance on hot coals just for the fun of it is quite evil. The Dungeon Master must make a judgment about how the psionicist uses the controlled creature.

Power score - The psionicist automatically wins the initial psychic contest.
20 - The psionicist suffers partial paralysis in an arm or leg for 1d10x10 minutes.

Psychoportation

Ravenloft jealously guards the power to leave a domain, so none of these powers can transport any creature or object across the borders of a domain. As an obvious corollary, these powers cannot expel any creature or object from the Demiplane itself.

Sciences

Banishment: The psionicist banishes the affected creature to a pocket dimension of shadow within the planar boundaries of Ravenloft. This area of oppressive darkness cannot be lit even by magic; such devotions as see sound work normally, but no form of infravision can penetrate the inky blackness. Since the pocket dimension lies within Ravenloft, all the twisted rules of the Demiplane still apply.

Power score - The banished creature cannot return of its own accord; it must wait until allowed to return or is brought back by another. The psionicist need not pay PSPs to keep it there.
20 - Both the intended victim and the psionicist are banished to the shadowy pocket dimension. The other figure bounces back when the psionicist stops paying the maintenance cost, but the psionicist must return via some other method: teleportation, dimension walk, etc. Such a return trip places the character in the same domain he was pulled from.

Probability Travel: This power simply does not work, but the psionicist still spends 20 PSPs to find that out. It will not even enable him to return from a failed banishment.

Summon Planar Creature: This spell functions normally in that it can still open a portal to another plane and pull the desired creature into the Demiplane of Dread. However, as the creature cannot return home and the character has no control over it when it arrives, the newly arrived fiend will probably turn on the psionicist if he does not take precautions.

Teleport: This ability functions much like the wizard spell *teleport* as described in Chapter Nine. Teleportation can never cross the borders of a domain. Any attempt to teleport outside of a domain simply deposits the character at the domain's edge.

Power score - The PSP cost reduces by 20% (round up).
20 - The attempt has no effect.

Teleport Other: This science has the same limitation as teleport. It cannot transport a creature across the borders of a domain. Any attempt to teleport outside of a domain simply deposits the character at the domain's edge.

Power score - The PSP cost reduces by 20% (round up).
20 - Would-be teleporters are disoriented. They cannot cast spells, and they suffer a -4 penalty to all die rolls for ld4 turns.

Devotions

Astral Projection: This power does not function in the Land of the Mists. Ravenloft does not allow any of its captive playthings to leave so easily.

Dimensional Door: Although Ravenloft does not allow inhabitants to journey to other planes or dimensions, characters can sometimes enter their outer fringes. A psionicist can use this ability to enter the Border Ethereal, but not the Deep Ethereal. This ability enables the character to travel only along the Border Ethereal or along the shores of the Demiplane of Shadow.

Dimension Walk: This power functions normally, with one minor exception: The psionicist crosses through the Demiplane of Shadow. The psionicist may encounter other creatures that are trapped in this dimension and has a base 5% chance of encountering a banished being. Even then, the creature may choose not to attack or even establish contact with the dimension-walking psionicist.

Power score - The psionicist receives a+ 2 bonus on the required Wisdom checks.
20 - Overcome with vertigo, the character can do nothing but retch for three rounds.

Teleport Trigger: This devotion functions normally in Ravenloft, with the following clarifications. A psionicist cannot set up a trigger for generic horror or fear checks. To do so introduces the mechanics of die rolling into the role- playing of the character, and characters know nothing about fear and horror checks.

However, the psionicist can specify a trigger like "whenever I see a vampire", which in many cases would be cause for a fear or horror check. The Dungeon Master should keep in mind that the trigger uses the psionicist's perceptions of the world around him. If the psionicist does not know that a character is a vampire, then the trigger does not react.

Telepathy

All self-willed undead monsters in Ravenloft have the insidious ability to present a facade of innocent thoughts, completely independent from their true ideas. In this way, evil hides its true nature until it can spring upon the hapless adventurer. As long as the creature keeps up this barrier, it is practically immune to most telepathic sciences and devotions.

Most undead choose to keep this shield of innocence up at all times, but they can drop the masquerade at any moment and reveal their true nature to an invading mind. Plumbing the depths of such an alien and evil mind can easily drive a psionicist to the brink of madness (see Chapter Six).

Vampires present a special exception to this rule. While sleeping, a vampire is just a dead body; it has no mind to contact and, thus, no shield of false thoughts. In fact, vampires almost never dream or exhibit any mental activity at all when sleeping.

Sciences

Domination: This science basically functions normally in Ravenloft, though its use treads a thin line between good and evil. The temptation to be cruel or to force the dominated creature to perform evil acts can be all but overwhelming. A psionicist who uses this power for unnecessarily selfish, whimsical, or evil purposes must make a Ravenloft powers check.

Power score - The maintenance cost lowers to half.

20 - The victim knows that someone attempted to dominate him.

Mass Domination: Same as domination (above).

Mindlink: This science works normally in Ravenloft. A mindlink never requires a madness check, even if the creature is undead or a horrifying monster. This powers does not plunge the psionicist into the depths of the creature's mind.

Mindwipe: This power can remove the memory of a terrifying event, thereby negating a failed fear or horror check. A single successful application effectively blocks off the experience and cancels the ill effects of the failed check. Since this power only seals the memories away and does not destroy them, psychic surgery can free them at a later time, again exposing the character to the terrifying experience and requiring another fear or horror check. Using this science does not prevent the loss of Intelligence, Wisdom, or experience levels as it would normally. Consequentially, mindwipe is not the optimal method for dealing with failed fear and horror checks.

Power score - The victim does not get a saving throw.
20 - The power affects the psionicist instead of his intended victim.

Probe: This power can pierce the layer of false thoughts produced by intelligent undead. Such undead receive a bonus equal to half their Hit Dice when defending against the probe. For example, a vampire (8+3 HD) gets a +4 bonus when defending against the probe. If the probe succeeds, it reveals the undead monster's horrifying nature to the psionicist, requiring a madness check.

Power score - The psionicist can ask two questions per round.
20 - The subject knows about the probe attempt. An undead monster may choose to let the psionicist succeed (forcing a horror or madness check) or answer the question in any way it desires. The psionicist does not know whether such answers are true or false (or even that the probe was detected).

Devotions

Contact: This devotion functions normally in Ravenloft and works against undead. However, this does not guarantee that the follow-up power will work. Contact does not provide any information about the mind or creature contacted. The psionicist cannot contact a sleeping vampire, for it is simply a dead body when at rest.

The cost to maintain contact varies with the level/Hit Dice of the target. The false thoughts projected by undead creatures can lower their perceived level; if a vampire passes itself off as a low-level human, it can also choose to lower the perceived level of its false-thoughts barrier. Any psionicist who successfully contacts the vampire pays fewer PSPs per round to maintain contact. Once the psionicist establishes contact, the vampire cannot alter the PSP cost, even if its true identity is discovered. The creature thus gives a small advantage to the psionicist in exchange for the ability to further mask its presence. Still, most undead do not bother to alter their perceived level against psionics.

The life-order classification of the target affects the psionicist's chances of success. Undead, lycanthropes, and the like qualify as monsters when determining these modifiers. Humanoids impose no modifiers, but monsters such as undead and lycanthropes impose a -7 penalty. (The creatures cannot adjust this modifier.) However, since the players should not roll the power-score check, they will probably not realize that the modifier even exists. After a few failed attempts to contact the creature, they may begin to suspect that something is not right; however, they will have no definitive proof, particularly since other modifiers (such as distance) may affect the chances as well.

Power score - The contact is maintained for four rounds without the expenditure of any PSPs.
20 - Further contact with this mind is impossible until the psionicist reaches a higher experience level.

ESP: This devotion functions normally in Ravenloft. However, the psionicist can pick up only the false surface thoughts of an undead creature unless it chooses to further open its mind. In that case, the psionicist must make a madness check. If he cannot understand the native language of the undead creature, he receives a+ 2 bonus on the roll.

Power score - The first round of maintenance is free.
20 - The psionicist develops a splitting headache and suffers a -1 penalty to all telepathic power-score rolls for one hour.

Identity Penetration: This devotion works normally in Ravenloft. Identity penetration is one of the few telepathic powers that can function on an undead creature, but this success has its price. The psionicist must roll a horror check if he penetrates the identity of any undead creature.

Power score - No additional effect.
20 - Until he gains another level, the telepath cannot penetrate the mind of the current target.

Inflict Pain: Using this power to torture any creature requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Life Detection: Normally, this devotion does not detect undead creatures. In Ravenloft, however, undead beings may attempt a saving throw vs. death magic when this power is used on them. If successful, the targeted undead creature appears to be a living, humanoid creature. Undead monsters can willingly fail the saving throw if they suspect that the psionicist is scanning; this renders them undetectable.

Power score - The psionicist can instantly detect everything within one hundred yards in every direction. Undead are not allowed a saving throw to manipulate detection.
20 - The telepath detects 1d6 creatures that are not there. Intelligent undead appear to be living beings if they so choose.

Truthear: Ravenloft protects its most cherished creatures with a veil of secrecy. Undead always appear to be telling the truth, even when it is obvious that they are lying. This psionic devotion has no mental telltale signs to determine the validity of a statement.

Power score - The psionicist recognizes a falsehood even when the speaker does not. If the target is undead, the psionicist is able to detect only whether or not the creature believes the statement to be true.
20 - The psionicist cannot use this devotion effectively against the subject for 1d6 days.

Metapsionics

Most of the powers in this discipline function normally in Ravenloft. Psionic powers that affect other psionic powers seldom concern the dark powers.

Sciences

Appraise: Appraise attempts to part the veil of the future. In Ravenloft that ability lies solely in the hands of the Vistani, so the strongest Vistana fortuneteller in the domain instantly becomes aware of the psionicist's attempt. She can choose to answer and provide any response she wishes.

Power score - The science works normally, giving a genuine appraisal of the situation. The Vistani are unaware of the attempt.
20 - The psionicist cannot use this science successfully again for ld4 days.

Aura Alteration: This science functions normally in Ravenloft. However, some powerful curses may have a stiffer penalty than -6 for success, and the curses endured by the lords of domains cannot be broken at all. In Ravenloft, infected lycanthropes are not cursed, so this power does not affect them at all. However, it does work on lycanthropes that attained their powers as the result of a curse.

The Complete Psionics Handbook states that an attempt to remove a curse, geas, or quest imposes a -6 penalty upon the chance of success. In Ravenloft, this remains true for geases and quests, but curses come in many shapes and sizes. The strength of the curse determines its penalty, as shown in **Table 33** (the definitions of these curse strengths can be found in Chapter Twelve: The Whispered Evil).

Table 33: Aura Alteration Modifiers

Curse Strength	Modifier
Embarrassing	-2
Frustrating	-4
Troublesome	-6
Dangerous	-8
Lethal	-10

Power score - No other effect.
20 - The full PSP cost of the power must be paid despite the lack of success. The psionicist cannot attempt to alter this aura until he achieves a higher experience level.

Psychic Surgery: This science functions normally in Ravenloft. It can remove the effects of failed fear, horror, or madness checks, so it is an extremely useful talent to have in the Demiplane of Dread. For details on its use, see Chapter Six: Fear, Horror, and Madness.

Ultrablast: In most cases this science works normally in Ravenloft. However, undead of all types are immune to its effects.

Power score - Living creatures of 3 Hit Dice or less die if they fail their saving throws. Self-willed undead must roll a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or "pass out" for 2d6 turns. This does not affect mindless undead.
20 - The initiator must roll a successful saving throw vs. paralyzation or die. If he lives, the psionicist still loses the use of all powers for 2d6 days.

Devotions

Psychic Drain: Draining psychic energy to the point of harm is not much different than drawing off a character's life energy, as a vampires does. Using this power to drain psychic energy in such a way that it inflicts damage requires a Ravenloft powers check. In fact, a draining that reduces the host to less than half of any attribute score requires an additional powers check.

Power score - The psionicist does not harm the host this time, regardless of how much he drains. If he drains a host below half of any attribute score, then he must still attempt the powers check.
20 - Contact is broken.

Retrospection: The description of this devotion states loose, wandering memories still bear the stamp of their creator. In Ravenloft, the memories of domain lords overshadow all others. Thus, the retrospection attempt has roughly a 10% chance of gathering a memory from one of the many domain lords of Ravenloft. If the nature of the question is such that only the

lord of the domain would know the answer, the chance rises to 50%. Such memories reek of evil and horrors that should not be contemplated by ordinary mortals, so each psionicist in the convergence must make a horror check. The Dungeon Master may grant a bonus to the roll, depending upon the quality of the memory.

Table 34: Retrospection Modifiers

Memory Detail	Horror Check Bonus
Extremely vague and fragmentary	+3
Vague or incomplete	+2
Complete but not very specific	+1
Reasonably complete and specific	0

Power score - No horror check is necessary.
20 - No other effect

Psychometabolism

Some of the darkest psionic powers lurk in this discipline, so using them in Ravenloft could result in a horrible fate. These abilities often capture the attention of dark powers.

Sciences

Animal Affinity: This science functions normally in Ravenloft. However, natives who see a character grow claws, fur, or other animal characteristic may well assume the worst. They will more than likely think that the character is a lycanthrope or some other form of shapechanging, supernatural creature. Anyone unprepared for the psionicist's change may need to attempt a horror check. Members of the character's party who have seen the psionicist use this science before need not make this check.

Death Field: Draining the life from a humanoid creature may cause it to return from the grave to haunt the character. This is left to the discretion of the Dungeon Master, but in general the spell should have a 10% chance of causing the victim to rise again. The mathematical odds are less important than the state of the victim, however. If the victim had great strength of will or left an important task unfinished, then his chance of returning as an undead creature should increase.

Whenever possible, the type of undead created should match the Hit Dice or level of the creature killed. Regardless of the original Hit Dice, however, the dead creature has a 20% chance to walk again as a revenant. The death field creates a direct channel to the Negative Energy Plane, so any undead creature inside such a field actually recovers as many lost hit points as it was supposed to lose.

Using this power requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Power score - The psionicist loses only half the number of hit points specified. Victims who fail their saving throws lose the full amount.
20 - The power fails, but the psionicist loses the hit points anyway.

Energy Containment: This science functions normally in Ravenloft. For clarification, the chill touch and level-draining attacks of some undead are not energy attacks, so this sci- ence does not affect them. Such attacks expose the victim to the supernatural chill of the grave, not a physical cold.

Life Draining: This science allows the character to imitate the draining powers inherent in some forms of undead. As with

the death field power, creatures killed by life draining can become undead and seek revenge (25% of the time). The type of undead usually matches the Hit Dice of the victim, but humans have a 25% chance of coming back as vampires, regardless of level.

Touching one of the walking dead reverses the flow of the power, causing an automatic backfire as defined by the power. The targeted undead creature absorbs half of the psionicist's remaining hit points.

Using this power requires a Ravenloft powers check.

> *Power score* - Rate of drain increases to 1d20 points per round.
> *20* - The target absorbs half of the psionicist's remaining hit points, reversing the power's effects.

Metamorphosis: This science functions normally in Ravenloft. However, natives who see a character take on animal characteristics may well assume the worst. They will more than likely think that the character is a lycanthrope or some other form of shapechanging, supernatural creature. Anyone unprepared for the psionicist's change may need to attempt a horror check. Members of the character's party who have seen the psionicist use this science before need not make this check.

Shadow-Form: This power allows a character to transform himself into a "living shadow". In Ravenloft, the character becomes a true shadow of the undead variety.

In campaigns utilizing the Requiem rules, the player can convert his character into a shadow using the guidelines found there. If these rules are not available, the character becomes a shadow as described in the MONSTROUS MANUAL tome. During his time as a shadow, the character has all the powers and disadvantages associated with an undead shadow. Thus, the shadow-form can be turned by priests and burned by holy water.

When the psionicist attempts to return to his normal state, he has a 15% chance of being unable to do so. In such cases, the individual is trapped as a shadow, remaining in that state until he finds some other cure for his condition.

Use of this ability requires a Ravenloft powers check.

> *Power score* - The psionicist can travel in brightly lit areas normally prohibited by this science.
> *20* - The dark side of the psionicist's nature breaks free. It becomes a shadow (see above) under control of the Dungeon Master for 1d4 turns and embarks on a killing spree. The psionicist expends no further PSPs if this happens.

Devotions

Absorb Disease: In Ravenloft, this power can absorb lycanthropy from another person. Some forms of lycanthropy are transmitted, magical diseases. The absorb disease devotion can draw this affliction into the psionicist's body.

If the psionicist targets a natural or cursed lycanthrope, this power does not remove the affliction from the victim. For those creatures, lycanthropy is not a disease but a condition. However, if they can transmit it to others as a disease, the psionicist will still "catch" it through this devotion.

Using this power does not cure lycanthropy. It merely transfers the disease from one character to another.

> *Power score* - The psionicist's immune system automatically destroys the disease (even lycanthropy).
> *20* - The disease remains in the victim while simultaneously spreading to the psionicist.

Aging: This power resembles life-energy draining. Anyone killed by this devotion rises as a ghost and seeks revenge upon the killer. Using this devotion requires a Ravenloft powers check.

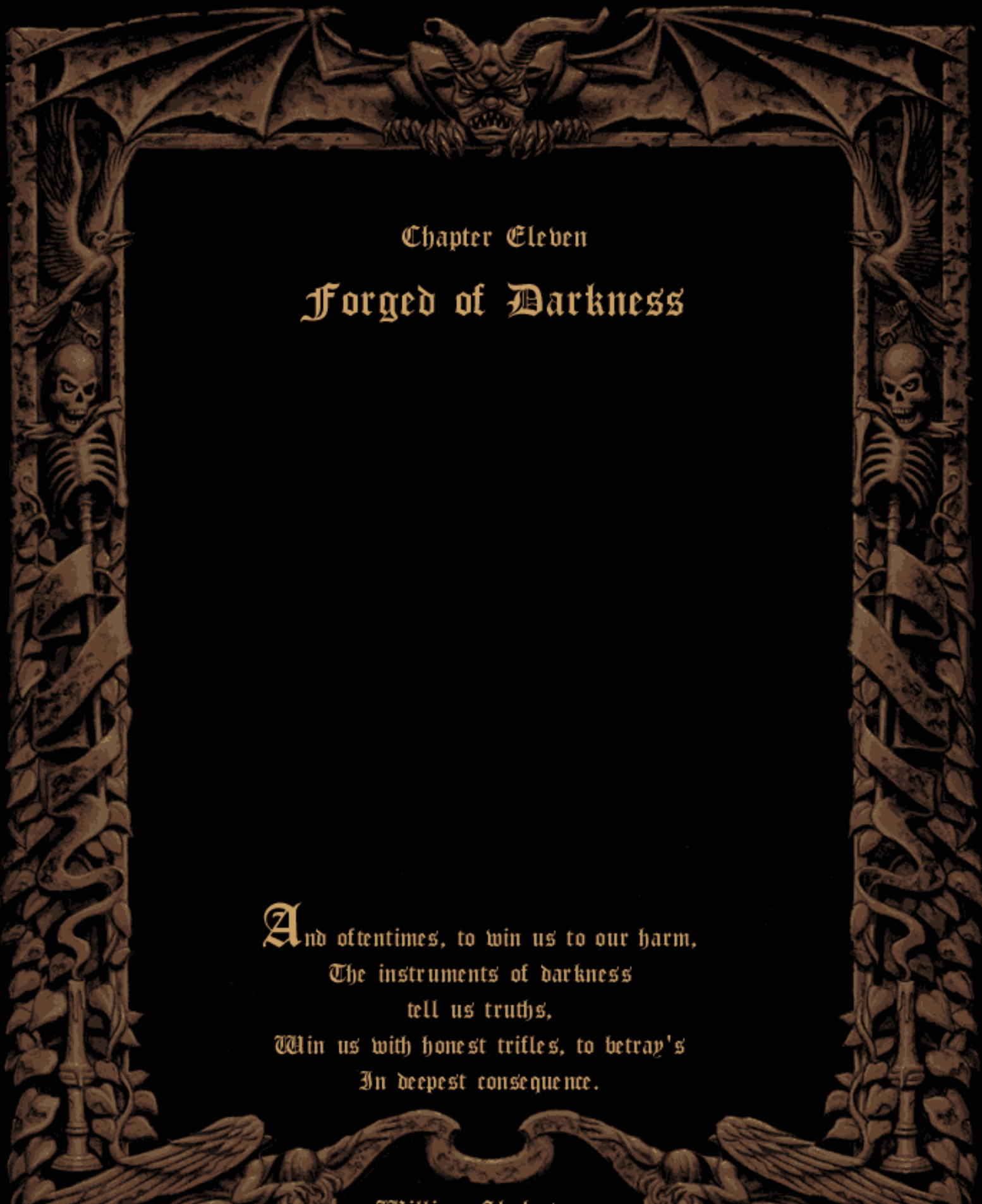
Power score - The victim ages 1d20 years.
20 - The psionicist ages 1d10 years.

Cause Decay: This devotion actually works better in Ravenloft. The Demiplane enjoys decay and decadence, so it enhances this devotion, inflicting a -2 penalty to the saving throw vs. acid.

Power score - The saving throw automatically fails. In addition, the psionicist must make a Ravenloft powers check.
20 - One of the psionicist's own items decays (no saving throw possible) - either the first item touched or one chosen by the Dungeon Master.

Cell Adjustment: This devotion works normally, though it cannot cure lycanthropy.

Double Pain: This devotion functions normally in Ravenloft. However, using it to extract information from a creature warrants a Ravenloft powers check.



Chapter Eleven

Forged of Darkness

And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness
tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.


– William Shakespeare
Macbeth

Like spells and psionic powers, magical items often function differently in Ravenloft. Some evil items, particularly those based on necromancy, actually work better in Ravenloft. In most cases, the following rule of thumb applies: If a magical item imitates a spell, the item undergoes the same changes that the spell does. Thus, if a spell does not function in Ravenloft, then no magical item that duplicates its effects will operate either. Chapters Eight and Nine detail the alterations to spells in Ravenloft.

Conversions and Considerations

This chapter covers changes to standard magical items, since it would be impossible to discuss every known magical item from every known campaign world. The collection is far too vast, and it continues to grow. Dungeon Masters may even invent new items for their campaigns, sometimes by incorporating items from other adventures or importing items from other worlds.



No matter what the circumstance, the following guidelines should provide enough information to determine the changes to any item brought into the Land of the Mists.

Planar Travel

The Mists rarely allow planar travel in Ravenloft. If an item has a power related to planar travel, that function usually does not work. Sometimes the item sends its owner to another location in the Demiplane, and sometimes the would-be traveler goes nowhere. Any item related to planar travel works properly only at the Dungeon Master's behest. In fact, a final adventure might revolve around discovering and using an item necessary to escape the Land of the Mists.

Summoning

Magical items cannot summon normal animals (wolves, cats, and so forth) from outside the domain in which the item is used. Further, animals and creatures summoned from other planes cannot go home the same way, so they will probably be very displeased.

Divination

Ravenloft weakens divination within its borders. No spell or magical item can identify evil or good alignments - only law or chaos. Likewise, spells of prophecy, clairvoyance, and the like are markedly less reliable when used through the obscuring Mists of Ravenloft.

Items that are wholly evil or that are used for evil purposes require a Ravenloft powers check when triggered. This does not include cursed items or items that simply cause harm. To necessitate a powers check, the owner must consciously choose to keep and use the item for evil purposes.

Frequency of Magic anft Treasure

Magic, especially in the form of magical items and devices, is less common in Ravenloft than in other realms. Few, if any, magical items are created here. Compared to other worlds, not many people live in Ravenloft. Thus, adventurers will not find piles of treasure just lying about for the taking. Here, wealth does not drive people; survival does. This does not mean Ravenloft lacks the element of greed, or that magical items do not exist. They are simply uncommon.



Even monsters do not ordinarily keep items they cannot use. If they hoard treasure, they must have logical and important reasons to do so; otherwise, the cupboard may be completely bare. Treasure should not ever accompany an encounter just because players expect it.

As a rule of thumb, Dungeon Masters should halve the usual chance that a given type of treasure is present. If using random die rolls to determine treasure, the Dungeon Master should generate the results before play begins. If the results call for a magical item, that item must fit the encounter logically. If not, the characters find nothing (that is, it should not simply be replaced with other types of treasure).

Although magical items are in short supply, money is not. Characters can readily obtain payment for services rendered. The folk are not usually rich, but they give up what they have for a good cause. If the player characters rid a village of a powerful evil force, the village might reward the party. They may even offer a rare magical item that they have been hiding - especially if that item will help the heroes destroy the village terror. Alternatively, they may tell the player characters where such an item allegedly exists, and the characters can then embark on a quest to find it.

In many campaign settings, the search for treasure drives both the characters and the players, but this should not happen in Ravenloft. Here, adventurers succeed by keeping their wits and skins; if they foil an evil plot, they have excelled. Survival, in most cases, is its own reward.

Intelligent Weapons

The ego of an evil, intelligent weapon rises five points in Ravenloft. (Weapons of good or neutral alignment stay the same.) If an evil weapon dominates its bearer, the weapon has a 50% chance of delivering itself to the domain lord. At the beginning of each week that a character wields an evil, intelligent weapon, he must attempt a Ravenloft powers check.

Artifacts and Relicts

Because of their unusual power, artifacts and relics may transcend the limitations of Ravenloft. At the Dungeon Master's behest, abilities and spells cast from an artifact or relic can function normally, unaffected by the Demiplane. These powerful items may even help characters escape from Ravenloft. An evil artifact might not want to leave, however. Furthermore, any character who owns an evil artifact or relic must make a Ravenloft powers check once per week - whether he uses it or not.

Table 35: Altered Magical Items

Amulet of the planes
Amulet vs. undead
Bag of beans
Bag of bones *
Book of vile darkness *
Bowl of commanding water elementals
Brazier of commanding fire etementals
Censer of commanding air elementals
Crystal ball
Cubic gate
Curdled death *
Dimensional mine
Disintegration chamber *
Flask of curses
Gem of seeing
Globe of serenity
Helm of telepathy
Horn of Valhalla
Horn of valor
Law's banner
Libram of ineffable damnation *
Medallion of ESP
Medallion of thought projection
Mirror of life trapping *
Mist tent
Necklace of memory enhancement
Oil of ethereatness
Phylactery of monstrous attention
Plate mail ofetherealness
Potion of undead control *
Powder of the hero's heart
Ring of Djinni Summoning
Ring of Vampiric Regeneration
Rod of Rulership
Scroll of Protection vs. Undead
Sphere of Annihilation
Staff of the Magi
Stone of Controlling Earth Elementals
Sword +2, Nine Lives Stealer
Sword of Life Stealing
Sword of the Planes
Talisman of Ultimate Evil

Teleportation Chamber
Thought Bottle
Trimia's Catalogue of Outer Plane Artifacts
Well of Many Worlds

* Could require a Ravenloft powers check

Altered Magical Items



Table 35 lists magical items that work differently in Ravenloft. The following pages present descriptions of each of the altered magical items.

Amulet of Life Protection: As long as the amulet is in Ravenloft, a captured psyche cannot leave the Demiplane. If the amulet leaves Ravenloft, the psyche can then depart.

Amulet of the Planes: Even if found in Ravenloft, this device simply does not work within the Demiplane.

Amulet vs. Undead: In Ravenloft, undead are more difficult to control. The amulet functions at one level below its usual capacity while on the Demiplane. In addition, the act of turning undead is itself less effective in Ravenloft, as indicated in Appendix Three: Character Classes.

Bag of Beans: Each bean has a 20% chance to "sprout" a Ravenloft encounter.

Bag of Bones: In other campaign settings, this bag can create a small army of skeletons. The bag works only in battles where at least one hundred creatures per side are involved. However, encounters this large rarely occur in Ravenloft. In the event that this occurs and this bag is used, twice as many skeletons appear (up to one hundred sixty). The user must also make a Ravenloft powers check.

Book of Vile Darkness: After reading this book, the evil priest gains just enough experience points to rise two levels, not the paltry half-level increase granted in other realms. Also, the priest still gains one point of Wisdom. A character of good alignment who reads the sinister scribblings in this tome must make a madness check. Reading this book requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Bowl of Commanding Water Elementals:
Brazier of Commanding Fire Elementals:
Censer of Commanding Air Elementals: The elemental cannot return to its native plane unless it finds a normal escape route from Ravenloft. Thus, if the elemental breaks free of control, it almost always attacks the summoner.

Crystal Ball: Domain lords are so much a part of the Demiplane that the crystal ball cannot distinguish them from the fabric of the land itself. Thus, characters cannot use these wondrous devices to study those dreaded creatures.

Attacks that require visual contact can affect the viewer. Thus, a vampire could feasibly charm the viewer through the *crystal ball*.

This item can reach across only a single Mist-bound region, which may include more than one domain (such as the Core or a Cluster). However, it does not work in the Mists themselves, as they distort location and distance.

Cubic Gate: This device does not function in Ravenloft.

Curdled Death: This aromatic oil is actually more powerful in Ravenloft. Its radius of effect extends to ten feet (instead of the usual five feet). Using such an evil substance requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Dimensional Mine: When this mine explodes, it kills all living creatures within the extradimensional space. It does not eject them onto the Astral Plane.

Disintegration Chamber: Placing someone—even a domain lord—in one of these chambers warrants a Ravenloft powers check.

Flask of Curses: In Ravenloft, this flask can confer even more horrid curses on the person who opens it. Table 36 lists the possible curse strengths. For further information to flesh out the curse, consult Chapter Twelve: The Whispered Evil.

Table 36: Flask of Curses Effects

1d10 Roll	Strength of Curse
1-3	Embarrassing
4-5	Frustrating
6-7	Troublesome
8-9	Dangerous
10	Lethal

Gem of Seeing: This item functions normally, with the following clarification: The description states that the caster can detect illusionary and invisible creatures. This does not include ghosts or other intangible beings, who are real while not physical. Undead creatures of this ilk do not appear differently through the gem of seeing. If they look like normal people, this item does not change the user's perception.

Globe of Serenity: The bonuses of this globe apply to fear and horror checks, even nullifying the effects of a failed fear check. If used on someone who has failed a horror check, he may make a new check to attempt to recover from the horror. This item does not affect failed madness checks.

Helm of Telepathy: In Ravenloft, undead with a low Intelligence or better can deliberately project thoughts to mind-reading characters. Usually an undead creature sends false, reassuring messages, but it can choose to reveal its true psyche, requiring the wearer of this helm to make a madness check.

Horn of Valhalla: As usual, the horn blower summons berserkers from Valhalla to fight for him. In Ravenloft, however, the berserkers break free of the enchantment after six turns, and they cannot return to Valhalla unless they find a different method of escape. Understandably, the berserkers will not be pleased about the summons, but if they were summoned to battle for a "worthy" cause, the newly freed fighters do not attack the horn blower and his companions. Instead, they simply leave in search of a route home. If they are ill-used or forced to act in a manner they find distasteful, though, the berserkers attack the summoner.

For every twenty-five fighters called, the horn has a 1% cumulative chance of summoning a greater power of Valhalla. Not bound by the laws of Ravenloft, it claims its fighters, takes the horn, and vanishes back to Valhalla. If the fighters were ill-used, it may even punish the wielder of the horn. Under no circumstances will this power release the characters from the

Demiplane.

If the horn blower ever leaves Ravenloft, he may still have to answer for his actions. For each berserker summoned while in Ravenloft, there is a 1% cumulative chance that a greater power of Valhalla appears before the user when he departs the Demiplane. This powerful being demands that the horn blower justify his actions, condemning him for trapping the berserkers in Ravenloft. At that point, the characters must make immediate reparations to the greater power or suffer the consequences.

Horn of Valor: This item functions as described for mobs and crowds of villagers, granting them a +2 bonus to their morale rolls for 1d4 turns. Hearing this horn also entitles a fleeing mob to a new morale check. If successful, the mob rallies and may once again approach monsters and the like. If used for a group opposing the mob, the horn lowers the mob's morale by one for 1dlO+10 rounds.

Law's Banner: All the effects of this item can affect mobs and crowds of villagers. The Dungeon Master must determine whether or not the mob or crowd is sufficiently lawful, keeping in mind that, almost by definition, a mob is a chaotic group. However, if the crowd of villagers appears to be highly organized, as might be the case with a unit of militia, the Dungeon Master might deem it lawful enough to qualify for aid from this magical item.

Libram of Ineffable Damnation: An evil character who reads this vile book in Ravenloft gains just enough experience points to rise two levels. The grim and terrible contents of this book require any good character to make an immediate madness check upon reading it. Otherwise, nonevil characters suffer the usual effects. Reading this libram requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Medallion of ESP:
Medallion of Thought Projection: In Ravenloft, undead with a low Intelligence or better can deliberately project thoughts to mind-reading characters. Usually an undead creature sends false, reassuring messages, but it can choose to reveal its true psyche, requiring the wearer of this medallion to make a madness check.

Mirror of Life Trapping: Using this item to trap a life requires a Ravenloft powers check, but freeing a trapped individual does not.

Mist Tent: Each time this item is used, it has a 5% chance of transporting the occupants to some other location on the Demiplane. Within the Mists, the chance rises to 25%. Like the Mists, this item has no compunctions about transferring the tent to a place above a lake or other potentially dangerous terrain.

Necklace of Memory Enhancement: In Ravenloft, many things are best forgotten. While wearing the necklace, the owner receives no bonuses to horror checks for the passage of time; in fact, the effects of failed horror checks never wear off. Prolonged use of the necklace (more than a week) under the weight of a failed horror check forces the wearer to roll a madness check.

Oil of Etherealness: Though a character can make himself insubstantial with this oil, he still cannot fully enter the Ethereal Plane and thus escape the Demiplane of Dread. The closest that the character can come to such a transference is a brief stroll in the Border Ethereal.

Phylactery of Monstrous Attention: When donned by a priest in Ravenloft, this item alerts the domain lord to the priest's location (within a mile). This phylactery summons only monsters native to the domain in which it is used.

Plate Mail of Etherealness: Though a character becomes insubstantial while wearing this armor, he still cannot fully enter the Ethereal Plane and thus escape the Demiplane of Dread. The closest that the character can come to such a transference is a brief stroll in the Border Ethereal.

Potion of Undead Control: An undead target receives a saving throws vs. spell to avoid the effects of the potion (undead that are not mindless get a +2 bonus). Domain lords automatically avoid being controlled. Significantly, intelligent undead may feign obedience to position themselves for attack. Using this potion requires a Ravenloft powers check.

Powder of the Hero's Heart: The +2 bonus to morale checks also applies to fear checks in Ravenloft. The powder does not affect horror and madness checks, however.

Ring of Djinni Summoning: After appearing and performing a service, the djinni will discover that it cannot return to its own plane. This violates the pact of the ring, so the djinni is immediately freed. If its former master was kind and reasonable, the djinni leaves to find its own exit from the Demiplane. If its former master was cruel and harsh, the djinni attacks immediately.

Ring of Vampiric Regeneration: Undead do not provide healing hit points to the wearer. Instead, they send Negative Plane energy through the channel created by the ring, inflicting as much damage upon the wearer as they would have healed otherwise. The undead monsters still suffer normal damage.

Each use of this ring requires a Ravenloft powers check, to a maximum of one check per week. (The character can use the ring more often, however.)

Rod of Rulership: Anyone controlling undead or extremely evil creatures for personal gain must make a Ravenloft powers check.

Scroll of Protection vs. Undead: Undead are more difficult to control in Ravenloft. The scroll's effects last only 5d8 rounds and restrain only 20 Hit Dice of undead.

Sphere of Annihilation: Anyone who attempts to use this sphere must make a Ravenloft powers check.

Staff of the Magi: The staff is incapable of planar travel in Ravenloft. Any attempt to utilize its planar travel ability fails but does not expend any charges.

Stone of Controlling Earth Elementals: The elemental cannot automatically return to its native plane. Therefore, if it somehow gains its freedom, the elemental attacks whoever summoned it.

Sword +2, Nine Lives Stealer: The wielder must make a Ravenloft powers check each time this sword steals a life.

Sword of Life Stealing: The wielder must make a Ravenloft powers check each time this weapon steals a life.

Sword of the Planes: Since Ravenloft lies within the Ethereal Plane, this sword has a +4 bonus here.

Talisman of Ultimate Evil: Using this item requires a Ravenloft powers check.

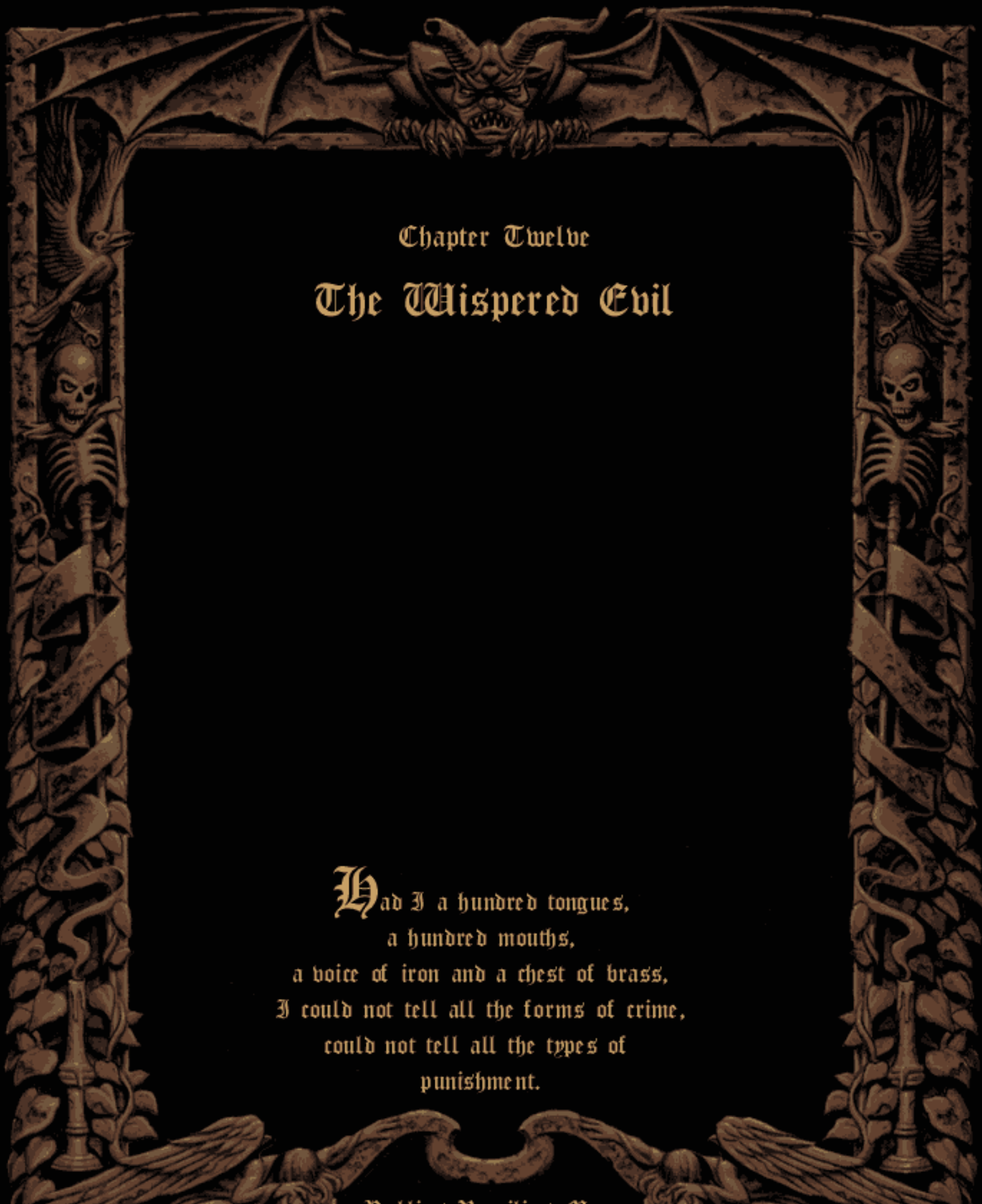
Teleportation Chamber: This arcane device cannot help someone escape the Demiplane. Neither can it teleport anything or anyone through closed domain borders.

Thought Bottle: A self-willed undead creature could place in the bottle a thought that reflects its evil essence. Any mortal who opens the bottle and speaks the command word would then suddenly experience the depths of evil in the undead monster's mind, which would require a madness check. Vampires and liches occasionally use this magical item as a trap for unwary hunters.

Trimia's Catalogue of Outer Plane Artifacts: The catalogue itself functions normally, except that it almost always requires an additional item (besides the money to acquire the device). The extra item must be placed on the book along with the required money. Some sample items include a drop of vampire's blood, a feather from a wereraven, a stone from the high temple of G'Henna, and so on.

The device that appears is one of the few ways to leave the Demiplane of Dread. However, in Ravenloft the item has a 20% chance of a malfunction, far greater than the normal 5% chance. The device vanishes when used, regardless of success. If unsuccessful, the character remains in Ravenloft.

Well of Many Worlds: In Ravenloft, this item looks like a simple, seamless piece of black cloth. It radiates strong magic but does not function.



Chapter Twelve

The Wispered Evil

Had I a hundred tongues,
a hundred mouths,
a voice of iron and a chest of brass,
I could not tell all the forms of crime,
could not tell all the types of
punishment.


– Publius Vergilius Maro
Aeneid

Laying a curse upon another individual is not a small matter in Ravenloft. Dire words invoke the energies of the dark powers themselves, something too horrible for most people to even consider. Still, some are drawn or pushed to that choice, either by their own weaknesses or by the wrongs inflicted upon them.

Types of Curses

Three basic types of curses exist in the Demiplane of Dread, each horrible in its own way. When measured against the dark oaths of Ravenloft, the magical curses of the AD&D game shrivel in comparison.

As a general rule, an individual can suffer the effects of only one curse at a time. Otherwise, a truly evil brute (the type of person who makes for an excellent antagonist in any adventure) would quickly become crippled with an abundance of curses. What a waste of a perfectly good villain! Therefore, no curse can affect a character if he already suffers from one of equal or higher strength. However, a more powerful curse always supplants a lesser one.

An important note to make at this point concerns the domain lords. By definition, each of them labors under the most horrible curse of all - ruling a domain in Ravenloft. Thus, any curse that the players might wish their characters to lay upon a domain lord is doomed to failure.

Spellcatser's Curses

This type of curse is the most common but least powerful of the three. It includes such spells as *Allisandro's binding curse* (Wizard 9), *ancient curse* (Priest 7), *divine curse* (Priest 6), *geas* (Wizard 6), *limited wish* (Wizard 7), *quest* (Priest 5), and *wish* (Wizard 9). *Bestow curse* (the reverse of the 3rd-level priest spell *remove curse*) is too insignificant to even count as a curse in the Demiplane of Dread.

Many other spells also qualify as curses in Ravenloft, including *feeblemind*, *polymorph other*, and similar spells of negative and permanent natures. Into this category falls the case of the hag who transforms a handsome prince into a toad for rejecting her advances.

The decision of whether a spell is being used as a curse falls, of course, to the Dungeon Master. He should consult the guidelines in the "Curses Laid by Player Characters" section at the end of this chapter before allowing any player character to invoke such powerful magic.

Anyone who holds a cursed object also falls under this category of curse. Though such curses can be quite severe and all but inescapable, some cursed objects are not worth the attentions of the dark powers. The holder of a *sword -1* has no right to complain about this insignificant curse, which only reduces his chances to hit an enemy in combat. Even someone wearing a *ring of contrariness* should consider himself quite fortunate compared to some of the more severe curse victims found in Ravenloft.

Self-Induced Curses

This fairly traditional type of curse includes all manner of afflictions brought about by the inner desires and lusts of individuals. No outside agents are responsible for what happens to affected characters; they have only themselves to blame.

Ravenloft's classic example of this type of curse lies in the case of Strahd von Zarovich, who so hungered for eternal life that

he sacrificed his own brother and drove the woman he loved to seek death. He was simultaneously "rewarded" with a transformation into an undying vampire lord and cursed to suffer eternally for his evil actions. Few, if any, in Ravenloft bear a heavier curse than Strahd.

Self-induced curses are some of the most interesting and can easily spice up most adventures. They can transform an otherwise drab and lifeless nonplayer character into an individual that the players will long remember. Perhaps the best examples of this type of curse can be found in the writings of Edgar Allan Poe.

Self-induced curses actually break into two separate types. The first contains the consequence of a life poorly lived. A man who spends his time hoarding coins in his counting house and eagerly stripping the unfortunate of their meager possessions might well end up wearing the heavy chains of a curse. Many ghosts suffer from this type of curse, such as Jacob Marley in Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*.

The second type of self-induced curse manifests from a single act of evil, so vile that it earns the attention of the dark powers or some other supernatural being. In Ravenloft, such a curse may be invoked by simply entering sacred chambers uninvited or undertaking vile acts such as grave robbing. In Har'Akir, one of the easiest ways to become cursed is to violate one of the tombs that house the mummified remains of the pharaohs. Such acts might bring down a curse that lingers for days, weeks, years, or even generations.

Curses of Vengeance

Curses of vengeance are the most traditional type. When someone horribly wrongs another, sometimes the Mists of Ravenloft give form to the victim's hatred and fury, and a curse descends to drape the offender in a shroud of evil. This is also commonly called a "Vistani curse", as they are noted for their ability to invoke this dark and sinister magic.

Countless stories use this sort of curse very effectively. Similarly, they can be very useful to Dungeon Masters of the RAVENLOFT game.

The most common form of this type of curse comes about due to the suffering of an innocent person. For example, a man is convicted of a murder he did not commit and sentenced to be hanged. On the gallows, he points out the man who framed him for the crime and issues a scalding condemnation for this dark act. Few feel pity for the true criminal when he begins to suffer from a series of mysterious calamities.

A curse of this nature can also be laid by an enemy who sees his own defeat as a great wrong. The important factor in weaving a curse is not whether a wrongful act has actually been committed, but whether the victim perceives he has been wronged. Curses of this type make a great parting shot for a villain on the edge of utter defeat.

Consider a group of adventurers that has driven a dark necromancer to the edge of a volcanic precipice and are about to force her into the fires and end her reign of terror. Just as a gleaming, obsidian-tipped arrow sinks into her chest and she topples backward, the wizard might lay a deadly curse on the heroes who bested her. Were the adventurers right to destroy the foul necromancer? Certainly. However, in the mind of their opponent, they were meddlesome travelers who had no right to interfere with her plans.

Similarly, this type of curse can be employed by those who feel that they have been wronged when no slight was ever intended. A beautiful woman who feels that her younger sister is blossoming into a splendor finer than her own might view this as an act of calculated evil (if her sister knew her place, she would dress plainly and spend more time praising the beauty of her elder sibling). In fact, the younger girl might have no idea that her sister feels this way. She might even attempt to model herself after her older sibling, whom she sees as far more attractive than she could ever be. Nevertheless, if the older girl decides that she has been wronged, her wrath can bring down a curse on her sister. Because they can be cast upon the innocent, these are perhaps the darkest of curses.

Creating a Curse



One of the elements stressed in RAVENLOFT campaigns is the subtle twist-taking a traditional convention of the Gothic horror model and tweaking it in order to take the player characters by surprise. For instance, each vampire the heroes battle should be a bit different from the classic model. This can entail simply describing the monster in some slightly deceptive way, hiding its true nature, or giving it unusual powers that other members of its kind do not share. However this is done, it keeps the players uncertain about the magnitude of the foe their characters are facing, and it gives them a feeling of doubt about their characters' ability to overcome it.

This same level of suspense applies to curses. Each one should be different. Each curse should be customized so that it matches the personality of either the character laying it or the targeted character. When designing a curse, the likes and dislikes of the person playing the targeted character can also be very useful. For instance, if the Dungeon Master knows that Lori's character has a fascination with ancient books and history, he can use this information to improve the impact of a curse. Suppose that every book or scroll Lori's character touched withered into ash. If, on the other hand, Lori's character happened to be a cat fancier, then all such animals might hiss and snarl in her character's presence. If Lori herself happens to share this interest, so much the better! Sure, this is hitting below the belt, but that is what curses are all about.

A number of factors contribute to the crafting of a proper Ravenloft curse. The following section discusses these factors.

Phrasing a Curse

The wording of a curse greatly affects its results. In fact, Dungeon Masters should consider the wording of a curse as important as the justification for invoking it. Consider an example of a peasant who has been unjustly beaten by an evil warrior. (This example is carried throughout the chapter.) If the victim simply says, "I curse your sword arm!" he does not add much flavor to the game, and the chance of success for his curse reflects this.

On the other hand, an imaginative and spiteful curse can do wonders to increase the tension and mood. Because of this, those who employ eloquent enchantments find the chances of success for their curses greatly enhanced. Suppose that the beaten peasant looked up from the ground, pointed a long, bony finger at the towering warrior who beat him, and declared:

> *By the blackness of the night,*
> *Never more shall your sword bite!*

Weakened be the hand that holds it,
Darkness now comes to enfold it!

What a curse! The intent is clear, and it accomplishes many of the important things that a curse must do. Curses shrouded in this sort of dark and macabre atmosphere make every aspect of the game far more enjoyable and theatrical.

Also, the wording of the curse should stay in tune with the person invoking it. Some people phrase their curses in poetic verse, like the one presented above, but such a flowery curse would hardly be fitting to a bestial madman or an uneducated brute.

The essence of the matter lies merely in conveying the raw emotion of the curser. While the Vistani have elevated the curse to an almost ritualistic level, calling for more poetic expression, most people do not pause to compose a biting rhyme. The player who delivers the words of the curse must consider exactly how his character feels at that very moment and then attempt to give voice to that wrath. A moment of stunned silence in the room after the curse has been uttered usually indicates that the hex is an effective one.

Descriptive Effects

While curses almost always have a direct effect on the game in terms of numbers and statistics, this element must be disguised in the Demiplane of Dread. Consider the cursing peasant again. He clearly intends to reduce the warrior's ability to wield his sword in combat. Thus, the Dungeon Master might decide that the warrior will now suffer a -1 penalty to all attack rolls (see "Resolving the Curse" later in this chapter). This need never be said, though, because the ominous wording of the curse makes its effects clear. The less frequently numbers and "game-speak" are tossed around, the more exciting and intense the game session.

Broad Prohibitions

To make a curse even more effective, it should penalize or regulate actions, not merely prohibit them. It is more insidious and colorful to punish the desired action, but still allow it to be done. For instance, the cursing peasant might have simply stated something like, "May you never strike successfully in combat again!" Such a sweeping restriction, however, would utterly change the brute's life and would not be the most effective curse. Though the warrior would have to give up his profession, the curse would no longer trouble him.

Curses should certainly target the offender in a manner that reflects the nature of the wrong committed, but the effects should be far more exacting than a simple and broad prohibition. A properly worded curse taunts the offender by injuring his abilities rather than destroying them.

Invoking the Curse

Curses can be invoked in a variety of situations. However, though spellcasters can create one at any time (if the proper magic has been memorized), the situation must warrant laying a curse for those not wielding magic. Generally, this means that a great wrong must be perpetrated (or at least perceived).

A number of factors can contribute to a person's ability to invoke a curse in the Demiplane of Dread. Among the most important are the emotion of the victim and the degree of harm done by the person to be cursed. The following text discusses these and other elements.

Justification

This aspect of a curse rates the degree of wrong done to the person invoking the curse, the actual perceived importance of the act in the cursor's eyes, and the frequency with which that character makes use of such dark means of revenge. **Table 38** lists the modifier that each of the following conditions imposes on the curse's chance of success.

Unjustified Curses: These curses are cast without cause, often tossed off without much forethought and with very little reason. Spellcasters who too quickly weave their mystical enchantments over any minor slight soon find that nearly all of their curses fall into this category. Such scourges have a very low chance of actually taking effect.

Justified Curses: These curses have a fair reason to be laid. For example, if a woman finds out that the neighbors have been stealing her best silver and laughing about it behind her back for many years, she might decide to curse them. This is certainly justified, as she has been wronged. These curses are more effective than unjustified ones, but they still have a fair chance of failing when invoked.

Highly Justified Curses: These curses are cast in response to a great wrong or threat. Someone who has been badly trampled by a careless rider's thundering horse might well reach into the darkest parts of his mind to draw forth a curse of vengeance in his last seconds of life. A highly justified curse has a very good chance of success.

If the target of the curse had to make a powers check for his action, then the curse is almost certainly highly justified.

Emotional Content

The mental state of the person invoking a curse is critical to its final effects. A woman enraged and heartbroken over her son's death can unleash a highly effective curse on his incompetent physician because her soul is torn apart by torment and hatred. Whether the physician truly was inept is not important at this point; only the woman's perception really matters. The emotional content of curses breaks down into three categories. **Table 38** lists the modifier that each of the following emotional states imposes on the curse's chance of success.

Normal Emotional State: Normal emotional states rarely produces a powerful curse. Anyone still in complete control of his mental faculties can seldom generate the emotional power needed to bring on a mighty curse. Only those of an extremely passionate and fiery nature can weave an enchantment in this state.

Charged Emotional State: Charged emotional states usually involve a wrong sensed by the rational mind. States of extreme anger or hatred (as opposed to outright bestial rage) mark this condition. Curses cast by those in this frame of mind are somewhat less effective than those invoked by someone who is highly charged; still, they stand a fairly good chance of success. A man wrongly accused of a crime by a crooked sheriff trying to cover his own misdeeds might easily fall into this category.

Highly Charged Emotional State: Highly charged emotional states are by far the most effective for unleashing a curse. The animalistic passions and primitive emotions that mark such a mood drive out rational thought, giving way to a frenzy of bestial fervor. Such a base personality can often make contact with the darkness that infuses Ravenloft and bend the powers of the Demiplane of Dread to his own desires.

A woman betrayed by a man who professed to love her for many years but left her standing at the altar may well fall into this category. Similarly, a parent mourning the needless loss of a child might easily function in a highly charged emotional state.

Additional Considerations

Many other things can make a curse more or less effective. Though the Dungeon Master should take each of these

considerations into account, none weigh as heavily as the emotional state of the wronged person or the justification behind the curse. The following elements only tangentially affect a curse's chance of success. **Table 38** lists the modifier that each of these conditions imposes on the curse's chance of success.

Background: Some people are more adept at bringing about curses than others, and many facets affect this ability. For example, the Vistani are noted for having great power to curse those who wrong them. Seldom, if ever, does a curse laid by a Vistana fail to take hold. The outcast darklings (see the RAVENLOFT monstrous compendium Appendices I & II) are also renowned curse weavers, though not of the same power as their former kindred.

Natives of Ravenloft usually lay curses better than travelers from other lands, who have been drawn into the Demiplane and are seeking escape. In general, the more closely a person is tied to the Land of the Mists, the greater his chance of invoking an effective curse.

The age of the person speaking the curse seems to have no impact on the chances of it taking hold, but gender does. For reasons unknown to science and magic, females seem to be slightly better at invoking the wrath of black fate than males. Tradition claims that this reflects the emotional nature of a woman's heart, but none can say for sure.

Character Type: Those familiar with magic, be they mighty or lowly, have a better ability to curse than those who have no use for arcane crafts. However, this has only a minimal effect on the curse's chance of taking hold. A familiarity with magic is useful, but hardly necessary.

Alignment: A person's alignment also affects his ability to call upon the powers of Ravenloft. Those of evil or chaotic alignments have a slightly better chance of unleashing an effective curse than those of good or lawful natures. This consideration also pales in comparison with the first two considerations of emotion and justification.

Drama: The conditions under which a curse is cast can also greatly affect its chance of success. Some times and places are particularly well suited to curses. A curse laid by someone on his deathbed generally has more drama than one laid over a nice cup of tea; an invocation made in a graveyard or an evil temple will certainly have a greater impact than one voiced in a well-lit dining room; and speaking a curse from the top of a battlement at the stroke of midnight during a tremendous thunderstorm is certainly better that pronouncing it on a lazy summer day.

Tailoring the Curse

The most satisfying curses are those that fit the crime. For a curse to be truly effective, it must touch its victim in a personal and emotional way. Each time the effects manifest, they should remind the victim of his misdeeds, be they real or imagined. The hardship that the curse brings should be a painful thorn in his side.

Poetic justice is crucial to designing an effective curse. In short, the punishment must fit not only the person, but also the deed itself. With a little imagination and effort, such things make for truly memorable game sessions and outstanding nonplayer characters. Read Dante's classic *Divine Comedy: Inferno* for some excellent examples of fitting curses.

Consider once again the peasant's curse upon the cruel warrior. While this is a wholly unchivalrous act in the first place, consider the possibility that the warrior delivered the beating more out of a love for brutality than because of some perceived wrong done by the peasant. As a final element, assume that the warrior, after beating the peasant, raises his sword and kills the poor wretch as a twisted lesson to all those watching. The peasant lingers just long enough to voice his curse before dying:

> *By the blackness of the night,*
> *Never more shall your sword bite!*
> *Feeble be the hand that holds it,*

Faded strength shall now enfold it!

This verse targets the warrior's personality by weakening the value of his sword in combat; had the offender been a priest, this would hardly have been appropriate. By the same token, it punishes the act of murder by relating the curse to the type of weapon employed. A curse relating to the warrior's wealth or position would have been less worthy. Additionally, the scene is certainly dramatic, and the curse is clearly both justified and backed by strong emotion.

Constant and Triggered Effects

Generally, curses manifest themselves in two ways. The first produces a continual effect that constantly hampers the character in his daily life. Generally, these curses are less intense, though more obvious to the outside world. The second variety of curse lies dormant until the affected individual takes a particular action or encounters a certain situation. Often, the dividing line between these two types of curses is vague.

Constant Curses

Someone who has been struck blind would suffer from a constant curse, as does the handsome prince who was transformed into a frog. Generally (though there are certainly many exceptions), these types of curses have less dramatic game effects than triggered curses. Obviously, being changed into a frog has a pretty big impact on the handsome prince's life, but such extreme curses happen rarely.

If the peasant's curse on the evil warrior had been worded differently, it might well be taken as a constant curse. Suppose, for example, it was presented in this way:

By the blackness of the night,
Gone forever is your might!
Weakened be your mortal frame,
With these words, your strength I claim!

In game terms, such a curse might reduce the warrior's Strength score. The Dungeon Master would determine the actual numeric loss, but a four-point reduction should be the upper limit.

Triggered Curses

These curses usually have a far more dramatic impact than constant curses. The peasant's original curse actually falls into this category, affecting the warrior only when he seeks to use his blade in combat. At that point, his sword arm becomes feeble, greatly reducing his effectiveness and prestige as a warrior. While wording the oath as a constant curse might reduce his Strength by perhaps four points, wording it as a triggered curse it can have far more impact perhaps even causing his Strength score to plunge to 3 when striking with his sword! Such a reduction in his chances of hitting a foe (and the minimal damage he could inflict) would certainly remind him painfully of the poor peasant he wrongfully killed.

Escape Clauses

When afflicted by a curse, a character must either learn to live with the effects or figure out how to rid himself of them When a nonplayer character suffers from a curse, escaping its effects becomes mostly a plot convention. If, however the curse afflicts a player character, the situation gains far more importance. For the purposes of classification, escape clauses are split into two distinct types: avoidance and redemption.

Avoidance

Perhaps the easiest way for someone to be rid of a curse is to simply shut out the action that triggers it. The cruel warrior that beat the peasant might avoid the curse simply by using a mace in combat instead of a sword. This might not be much of a sacrifice, unless the blade he was forced to spurn was a family heirloom or was greatly enchanted. Anyway, victims can thus avoid a curse's effects without actually being free of it.

It is even possible, in some cases, to avoid the main impact of a constant curse. A vain prince who has been rendered horribly ugly by the curse of a rejected lover might resort to wearing a mask at all times. This would allow him to continue dealing with the world, even though it does not actually eliminate the curse.

Redemption

Every good curse has some sort of escape contingency built into it. Usually this type of clause allows the victim to free himself of the curse by performing a particular act or by suf- fering appropriately for a certain time. The method of freeing a cursed person must relate to the act that brought about the curse in the first place. Further, the person invoking the curse must fit this qualification into the actual wording. Suppose that the peasant's curse had been worded thus:

> *You bring the blackness of the night.*
> *Your heart is euil, full of spite.*
> *Until some fair amends you make,*
> *Each sword you wield shall surely break!*

The wording of this curse allows the warrior to escape the peasant's wrath by mending his evil ways. If he becomes fair and just, he can again wield his favorite weapon with power and dignity. (Of course, he might be unable to change his nature, but that is up to him.) The best curse acts as a corrective measure, much as a punishment might teach a child not to lie.

Strength of the Curse

The final aspect to consider in designing a curse is the relative strength of the curse being cast. In general, curses can be grouped into five different levels of seriousness: embarrassing, frustrating, troublesome, dangerous, and lethal.

Embarrassing Curses

These, the least of curses, are used to punish minor transgressions. No actual game effects result from embarrassing curses, but they add a touch of flavor and serve as a constant reminder to the offender of his wrongdoing.

A thief who steals from his brother (who can afford it, but is shocked by the betrayal of trust) might be cursed by his sibling to have hands as black as coal. If he chooses, the thief can hide this affliction by wearing gloves (although wearing gloves might hinder his thieving abilities).

Another example of an embarrassing curse is a callous rake who is cursed to stutter whenever he speaks to a beautiful woman. If he remains silent or converses only through letters, the curse has no effect.

Frustrating Curses

These curses answer fairly moderate affronts, and they interfere with a person's everyday life. Frustrating curses often have some minor negative game effect. As a rule, a curse of this level can apply a penalty of only two points to a single aspect of

the character.

The thief in the above example could have been cursed to have his hands shake incessantly. This would cause a reduction of two points in his Dexterity, thus lowering his chances of success for many of his thieving skills. While he still might easily move silently or hide in shadows, he would certainly have problems picking a pocket or disarming a trap.

The ultimate effect of the curse is, of course, up to the Dungeon Master, but it should take into account the seriousness of the offense and the emotion of the person laying the curse.

Troublesome Curses

These curses are perhaps the most useful for adventure design purposes. In general, troublesome curses can be inflicted only for major offenses. It dramatically alters the victim's life, though it places him in no true, physical peril. The peasant's curse upon the cruel warrior counts as a troublesome curse. This type of curse will typically reduce a single characteristic or ability by up to four points. Occasionally, it might affect two aspects of the character, reducing each by two points.

Curses of this level also allow for an alteration in the personality of the target. For example, a person might have an undying lust for gold implanted in his mind or his heart might become filled with desire at the sight of a given woman. Of course, this alteration must always cause the character to want for something that the nature of the curse makes it difficult or impossible for him to obtain.

Dangerous Curses

This truly powerful magic is doled out only in response to a great wrong. A dangerous curse radically alters the victim's former lifestyle, imposing a six-point penalty on a single aspect of the character or two reductions of three points each.

While troublesome curses can alter a character's personality, dangerous ones can actually make major changes in the target's physique. For example, a dangerous curse might afflict someone with lycanthropy on the three nights of the full moon. Similarly, such a curse might cause a young harlot to rise from her grave as a vampire when she dies. Any curse in this category can utterly destroy a person's life. If the thief were stricken blind for a day the moment he violated a law, his career as a rogue would be over.

Generally, player characters should not be afflicted with a curse of this magnitude unless the means for removing the curse are fairly close at hand.

Lethal Curses

This most dreadful type of curse utterly destroys the victim's way of life and may even lead to his death. So powerful a curse will emerge only in response to a great wrong, and it must be laid with great emotion. Some say that the dark powers themselves hand down these curses as a prelude to the absolute destruction of someone who has no hope of redemption.

Any curse that instantly and utterly transforms someone's physical or mental self falls into this category. Strahd von Zarovich's transformation to a vampire was the result of such a curse. If applied to ability scores, a curse this powerful can cause a reduction of eight points to a single attribute or two reductions of four points each.

A player character should never fall victim to this type of curse unless the Dungeon Master desires to remove him from the game. If this is the case, the player should be made aware of the potential loss of the character and have a chance to repent before the curse takes hold. Otherwise, hard feelings will surely result, ruining everyone's fun.

Power Checks for Cursing

Speaking a curse is no small matter in the Demiplane of Dread. The very nature of the act sends a shiver through the fabric of the land, which cannot help but draw the attention of the dark powers. Thus, as soon as the curse is uttered, the individual laying it must roll a Ravenloft powers check (see Chapter Seven: Powers Checks). The chance of failing this check varies with the power of the curse.



The more deadly the curse, the more likely it is to earn the attention of the dark powers. **Table 37** indicates the normal chances that a powers check will fail for a given curse. If a character invoking a curse fails his powers check, he draws the attentions of the dark powers. Dungeon Masters may modify these numbers based on the circumstances of the event. A highly justified curse, for example, would have a smaller chance of failure than one laid out of pure spite and malice.

Table 37: Powers Checks for Cursing

Curse Strength	Powers Check
Embarrassing	2%
Frustrating	4%
Troublesome	8%

Dangerous	16%
Lethal	32%

Resolving the Curse

Once a curse has been laid, the Dungeon Master must decide whether it takes hold and, if so, its exact effect. The most important rule of thumb is that if the curse dramatically enhances the adventure, then it works. In the AD&D game (no matter what the campaign setting), no table or rule can replace the insight and eye of the Dungeon Master. This holds as true for curses as for encounters, events, ability checks, and combat (in short, die rolls of every kind). If the curse would further the Dungeon Master's story, then it succeeds. On the other hand, if it would impede the progress of the adventure, then it fails.

Still, some demand specific rules - a table that gives them some idea of the percentage chance that a curse will take hold. A curse has a base chance to take effect of 0%. When a curse is laid, the Dungeon Master should proceed through each of the modifiers in **Table 38** and then roll against the final total. If the result is equal to or lower than the curse's chance of success, then it succeeds. If not, it fails.

Table 38: Curse Success Chance

	Modifier
Result of Power Check	
Succeeded	-25%
Failed	+25%
Justification	
Highly justified	+10%
Justified	+0%
Unjustified	-10%
Emotional State	
Highly charged	+15%
Charged	+5%
Normal	-10%
Background	
Vistani	+25%
Other Ravenloft native	+10%
Nonative	-10%
Male	-5%
Female	+10%
Character Type	
Spellcaster	+5%
Nonspellcaster	-5%
Alignment	
Lawfull	-5%
Chaotic	+5%
Good	-10%
Evil	+10%
Drama of Curse	
High	+25%
Average	+0%
Low	-25%

Wording

Mentions game mechanics	-15%
Includes broad prohibiton	-15%
Not tailored to victim	-15%
No escape clause	-15%

Curses Laid by Player Characters

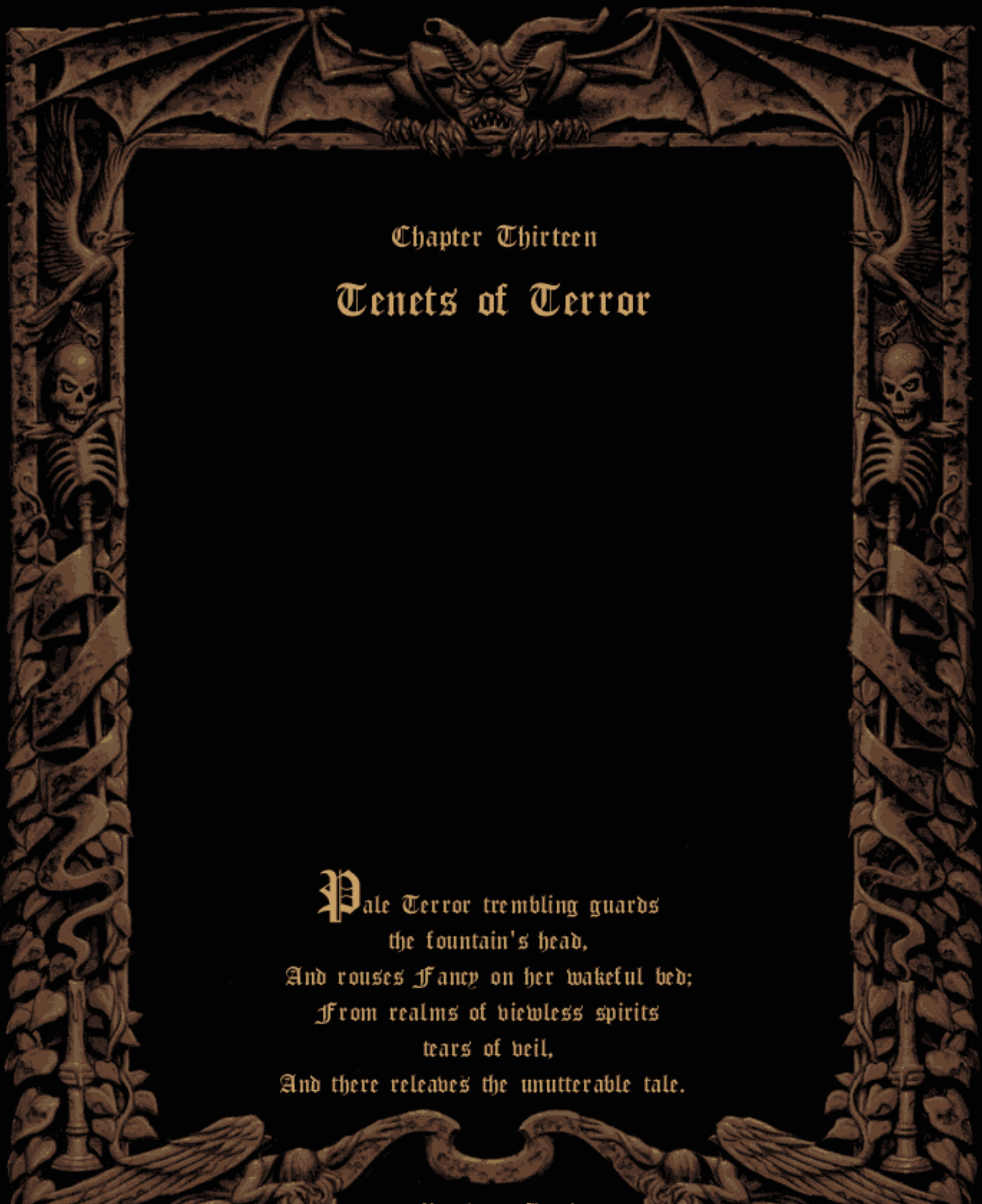
Curses can be very powerful, and if used correctly, they can create some stunning effects on both the adventure and the characters. However, if unleashed upon the adventure at an unexpected time, this same potential impact can drive a Dungeon Master to despair. Even the mightiest efforts of the Dungeon Master can be ruined by a casually tossed curse. Thus, player characters should not freely toss curses around.

This does not mean that a player character should be unable to lay a curse. Curses can be entertaining (in game terms), and the players expect to have fun when they enter the realms of the Dungeon Master's imagination. Thus, characters should be able to invoke curses only under controlled circumstances.

The Dungeon Master should pay careful attention to the use of a curse by a player character and should strictly enforce the rules that govern curse content and style. Most importantly, the curse must be appropriately dramatic.

For example, assume the player characters have been hunting a vampire across the wilds of Valachan. On the wooded shores of the Arden River, just outside of Hebelnik, they believe that they have cornered the monster. In reality, however, they have walked into a trap. The vampire easily kills one of their number when it strikes, and the others are left wounded and unable to follow as it flees into the night. If the dying character was not utterly disintegrated, then the Dungeon Master might allow a last few words. With a dying breath, the character could curse the vampire that killed him. Similarly, if one of the other characters in the group had a special relationship to the deceased, he might hold the fallen one and speak a tearful curse against the vampire that claimed his beloved companion.

Such a curse still requires a Ravenloft powers check, of course. That alone can be enough to keep many players from using them. If players insist on invoking curses frequently, ignoring the peril they place themselves in by calling upon the dark powers in this way, the Dungeon Master should simply stop rolling for their checks, assuming that they fail automatically. A player whose character has begun to change into a reptilian swamp dweller is less prone to invite future gifts of the dark powers.



Chapter Thirteen

Tenets of Terror

Pale Terror trembling guards
the fountain's head,
And rouses Fancy on her wakeful bed;
From realms of viewless spirits
tears of veil,
And there releaves the unutterable tale.


– Matthews Lewis

Ravenloft adventures have a unique feel to them that must be maintained if the players and Dungeon Master wish to get the most out of their role-playing experience. This chapter examines the RAVENLOFT campaign and what sets it apart from other role-playing games - even those of the horror genre.

Fantasy Horror

The RAVENLOFT game involves classic horror in which the darkest of evils descend upon a more or less civilized world and prey upon the unsuspecting citizenry therein. However, it is also a game of swords and sorcery, knights and wizards, heroes and monsters. Unlike any other horror or fantasy game, this system meshes these two traditions into one genre that can best be called fantasy horror.

Gothic Tradition



From its Gothic roots, the RAVENLOFT setting draws the elements of fear and terror that have fascinated mankind throughout the ages. Here live the greatest of villains and the most diabolical of creatures. Vampires and werewolves, witches and black cats, ghosts and spirits - all these things abound within the Land of the Mists.

Many Dungeon Masters have difficulty capturing the subtle flavor of Gothic horror. While anyone can write a game in which armies of rotting zombies hammer away at the heroes, such an approach fails to include the subtle romance and drama that makes for a truly horrific experience. Death lasts only an instant, but horror can linger for a lifetime.

Gothic horror creates a world of shadows where mysteries are as much a part of the adventure as frightening monsters and deadly villains. Heroes must use their wits as well as their swords if they want to emerge triumphant. To that end, the Dungeon Master must consider many aspects of play. The following elements have special importance in the traditions of Gothic horror.

Helplessness

In Gothic horror, the hero generally confronts creatures and situations far more powerful than any he might be reasonably expected to deal with. Jonathan Harker, for instance, certainly proved to be no match for Dracula. He was an insignificant fly cast into the web of the greatest evil the world has ever known.

In Ravenloft, however, this is a little harder to accomplish. A group of heroes can make up a very powerful force. Thus, very little truly terrifies a strong party of adventurers. It is important, however, that in the face of whatever villain they confront,

the assembled heroes still feel a certain degree of helplessness.

The Dungeon Master can impose a sense of helplessness on the heroes in many ways. For example, he could plan an adventure where the characters have a chance to use some great spell or artifact on the villain, only to see him shrug it off as if it were a mere trifle. Such a scene can rattle the nerves of even the most dedicated enemy of evil.

Isolation

This is one of the most important aspects of Gothic horror, and one that a Dungeon Master can easily include in any game session. In its purest form, isolation cuts the heroes off from each other or any hope of outside assistance. A team of explorers shipwrecked on an island inhabited by a colony of illithids will probably not find any allies among the ranks of those vile creatures. Even the human cattle on which the mind flayers feed do not present a very promising source of aid or comfort.

Isolation confronts the characters with two distinct problems that can shake the confidence of even the greatest warrior. First, they must depend utterly upon themselves and their own resources. No one else is going to wander by and give them an important clue. Second, they often have no route of retreat. If things get too rough for them to deal with, they cannot simply withdraw to a safe position and regroup. They stand with their backs against the wall.

Alienation

In many ways, alienation resembles isolation; in some ways, however, it is even more frightening. An alienated group of heroes might find themselves in the heart of a great city, surrounded by people, but still feel cut off from help. This happens when the heroes discover something that no one else will believe or when cultural differences keep them from interacting with the locals. Things only get worse if the heroes do not speak the same language as those they are trying to convince. A great many psychological thrillers depend upon one or both of these techniques.

An example of alienation might entail a group of adventurers who know that the burgomaster of the village is actually a vampire, but no one believes their claims. Indeed, if the burgomaster is an especially beloved individual, the alarm that the heroes try to raise might turn the populace against them.

Contrasts Any adventure becomes more exciting with the liberal use of dramatic contrasts. When the Dungeon Master uses this technique for his descriptions, things that appear wholesome and happy by day become frightening and menacing at night. Evil seems all the more disturbing when placed side by side with innocence.

Again, the novel *Dracula* makes excellent use of this technique. The death of Lucy Westenra, as charming and elegant a young lady as one might hope to meet, is tragic enough. When she rises from the grave as a foul thing of the night who preys on small children, however, the true horror of what has happened rings clear.

Ignorance

A final important aspect of horror centers around the information available to the characters. No matter how much the players deduce or how many answers they uncover, they must always believe that other crucial tidbits exist that they do not know about. This may very well be untrue, but they should always feel that they are missing some important piece of the puzzle.

If done correctly, this technique makes the players feel that danger surrounds their characters. Who knows what trick the fiend their characters are stalking might have in store for them? Doubts like this enhance the characters' feelings of weakness and vulnerability.

Role of Fantasy

Ravenloft is also a realm of the fantastic. The heritage of the AD&D game graces the Demiplane of Dread with valiant knights, devout priests, powerful wizards, and cunning thieves. Taken from their traditional places as glorious defenders of the light and cast in more somber roles, these characters must now adventure in the Land of the Mists.

Of course, fantasy literature has a long tradition, and players (rightfully) expect certain elements. Thus, a good RAVENLOFT adventure should include swords and sorcery as well as the macabre. Consider the following aspects whenever designing an adventure or campaign.

Heroism

At least once in every adventure, the players should have a chance to show their characters' mettle. This might involve combat, a chance to behave in a chivalrous fashion, or an opportunity to demonstrate the skills and powers that set them apart from the common folk. Since every adventure must vary the pace of play from time to time (see "Laying Out the Plot" later in this chapter), a scene like this can provide a break from the grim and ghastly.

Romance

Of course, Gothic horror makes use of romantic involvements as well, but it is even more prevalent in heroic fantasy. A bit of romance - whether between two player characters, a player character and a nonplayer character, or even two nonplayer characters - can add a lot to the flavor of an adventure. Nothing spurs a knight into battle more than when the hand of a lady is at stake.

If used in conjunction with the horrific aspects of the game, romance can provide an especially useful tool for the Dungeon Master. Imagine the warrior's surprise when he discovers that his beloved is not being held by the evil monster, she is the creature he set out to slay!

Magic and Wonder

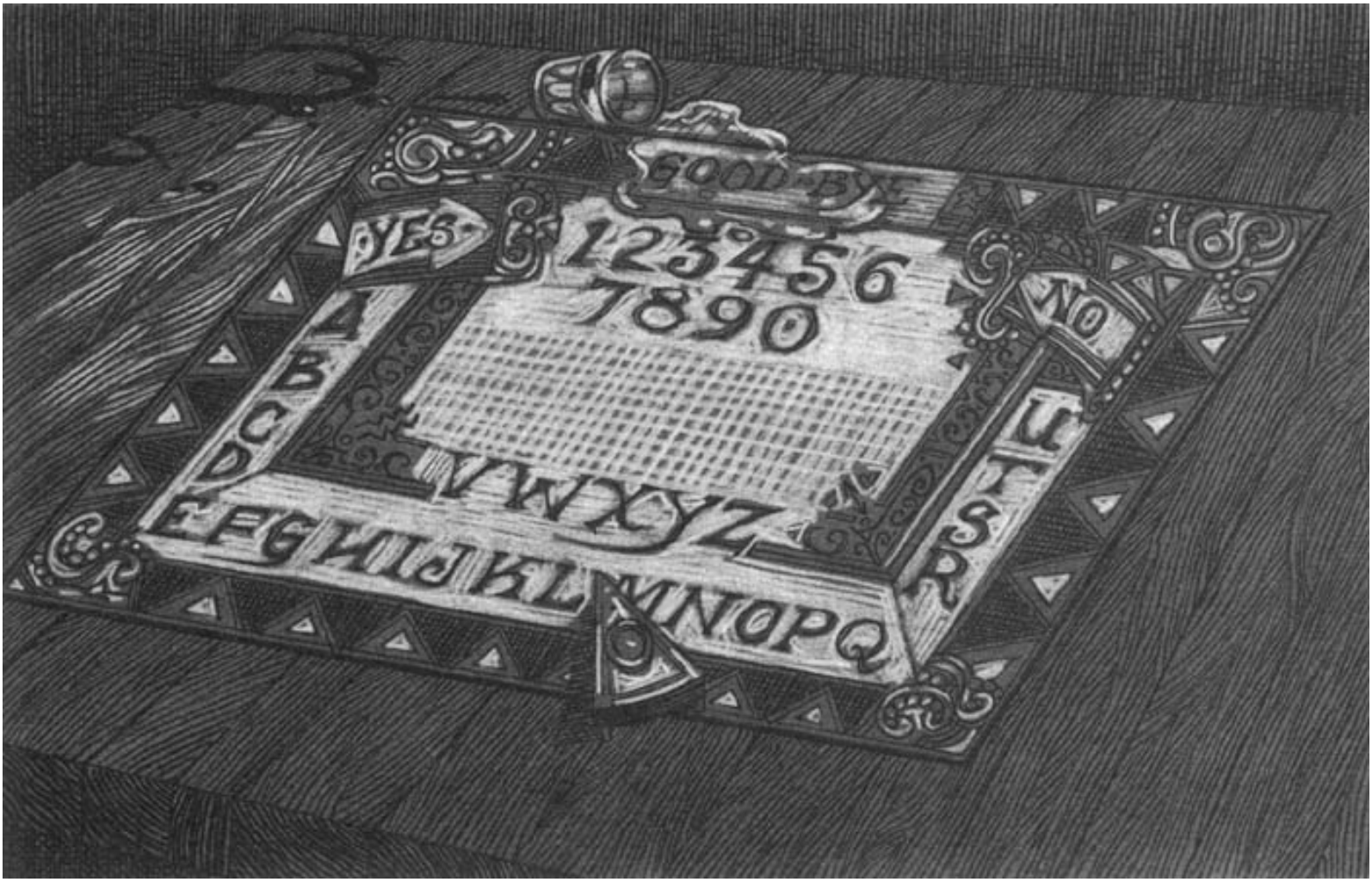
Of course, magic plays a smaller role in Ravenloft than it does in many other fantasy settings. However, every adventure should have at least one scene where the characters encounter some aspect of fantasy and awe. This might entail a chance to show off their own magical abilities or the opportunity to partake in some unusual ritual or ceremony.

No matter what the nature of this element, it should make the players go "ooooh" and "aaaah", like a good fireworks show.

Scenarios and Campaigns

A RAVENLOFT game is usually made up of three interlocking classifications of role-playing sessions: a scenario, a scene, and a campaign. A scenario is a single adventure. It might take only a few hours to resolve, like exploring a haunted house, or it might be extremely complex, requiring several game sessions to play through. Most importantly, the scenario must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Whether it seems more like a short story or a full novel, it must be a self-contained adventure. Scenes are the single, short encounters that make up each scenario.

A campaign, on the other hand, is nothing more than a series of adventures featuring the same characters (and containing a series of scenarios). A trilogy of movies or books could be thought of as a campaign, as can just about any television series. In some cases, the adventures that make up a campaign will have few continuous elements (other than the characters). The many adventures of Sherlock Holmes fall into this category, as do the stories of Carnaki the Ghost Finder. Other campaigns have complex plots and subplots running across many adventures.



Designing a Ravenloft Scenario

Creating an adventure for a RAVENLOFT game is both similar to the drafting of any other role-playing scenario and, at the same time, a unique undertaking. The following section details this process step by step.

Adventure Ideas

The first step in designing an adventure involves forming a core idea upon which it will be based. No matter how grand or convoluted the Dungeon Master intends to make the plot, he should always be able to summarize the storyline in a single sentence. Consider the following example:

> *The heroes are shipwrecked on a mysterious island, where they are imprisoned by a sadistic asylum keeper who conducts experiments that drive his patients mad.*

This describes *Whom Fortune Would Destroy*, an adventure in the *Bleak House* boxed set. Of course, the adventure consists of a great deal more than that, but that single, short paragraph establishes the important facts. If an adventure cannot be boiled down to so succinct a description, it is probably too convoluted.

Important Considerations

Any good adventure will be imaginative, frightening, and well-reasoned, just like a good story. In addition, however, a good Ravenloft scenario should feature most or all of the following things:

- The setting should be intriguing, with interesting nonplayer characters. Opportunities for role-playing should be many and frequent.
- The characters must have a fair amount of control over the flow of the adventure. While the Dungeon Master may have a good idea of what he expects his players to do, he must always be ready for the unexpected. A good Ravenloft scenario is fluid, responding to the actions of the heroes whenever possible.
- If the scenario fits into an ongoing campaign, the Dungeon Master should try to include aspects of foreshadowing that will offer players a glimpse of what is to come in future games.
- By the same token, a campaign scenario should harken back to events in past games, giving the players a sense of continuity.
- The adventure should include scenes that will appeal to each of the players in the group. Those who like to charge into combat should have a chance to battle monsters, while those who like to solve puzzles should find their wits challenged.
- Lastly, the adventure should begin and end with an exciting scene. A quick-paced beginning captures their interest and draws them into the story, while an exhilarating ending gives them the satisfaction of a grand finale, resulting in a standing ovation for the Dungeon Master.

Objectives

Each adventure must have a clearly defined objective. In some cases, this might consist of a mystery for the heroes to solve; in others, it might entail the destruction of a truly powerful monster. Whatever the objective, it must be clear to the players.

This does not mean that the Dungeon Master needs to open every adventure by saying, "In this scenario, your characters have to explore the haunted castle and banish the spirit that lives there". Part of the fun in any role-playing game lies in discovering exactly what the characters are expected to do. Neither does this imply that the Dungeon Master should avoid using smoke and mirrors to obscure the ultimate goal of the adventure or even having a few red herrings show up.

Villians

Every adventure should have a central villain. Often, the objective of the adventure will be, more or less, to confront and defeat this character. Much more goes into the creation of a "good" villain than simply giving him a few extra Hit Dice and

special attacks, however. A truly memorable villain probably embodies some (if not all) of the following characteristics:

- The villain must have qualities that the heroes see in themselves. Professor Moriarty, for example, is all the more terrible because he is so much like Sherlock Holmes. At least one of the players should feel as if his character is looking into a dark mirror when he gazes upon the villain.
- The villain must pose a threat to either the heroes or something that they hold dear. This does not mean that he must be physically powerful, only that his machinations and influence are great enough to endanger them. Few villains are as terrible as Adolf Hitler, yet he was hardly a physically imposing man.
- The elements of poetic justice discussed elsewhere in this book should be apparent to the players. If this is not the case during the course of the adventure, it should appear by its conclusion. The heroes should always end a game thinking "he got what he deserved".
- The villain must become an individual in the eyes of the players. *Dracula* is not a classic novel merely because it focuses on a vampire; its fame comes from the fact that it features the greatest of all vampires. Though many other vampires appear in the book, there is only *one* Dracula.
- Lastly, the villain should be larger than life - or death, as the case may be. Just as the heroes stand a little taller than the common folk of the world, so too must their enemy be exceptional.

Minions

In addition to the main villain of an adventure, the heroes will almost certainly come across lesser creatures who serve the true fiend. In some cases, these will be monsters, while in others they might be normal folk who follow their dark master for their own reasons.

The minions of a villain should generally help pace the adventure by giving the heroes someone to defeat. However, they can also serve as sources of information, revealing important secrets through accidental slips of the tongue or after being captured. A good minion might have one or two of the characteristics listed above, but he need not be as detailed as the main villain.

Laying Out the Plot

Once the Dungeon Master establishes the objective of the scenario, the major villain, and a few minions, he must detail the storyline. The best method of constructing a plot is to lay out the most likely course of events (just as you might outline the scenes of a movie).

I The heroes discover the body of an old man who was murdered and left in a dark alley.
II Investigating the murder, they find that he was a hermit who lived in the woods several miles outside of town.
III The player characters travel to the hermit's home and discover that he dabbled in magic, including the dark art of necromancy.
IV Further investigations reveal that the hermit accidentally summoned a vengeful spirit from beyond the grave.
V The player characters track the spirit to its lair, the churchyard in which it was buried, and confront it.

Of course, this is a very simple plot, but it illustrates the important scenes that make up the scenario. These scenes obviously need to be detailed more before playing the game. No doubt the players will have to discover some secret weapon or tactic that enables them to face the spirit triumphantly.

Contingencies: Next, the Dungeon Master must look at his plot and consider other possible actions. If the heroes do not take an interest in investigating the murder, for example, he might introduce a young woman who provides them with a reason to do so. Of course, the Dungeon Master cannot possibly predict every possible action of the players, but he can certainly anticipate the most likely ones.

Subplots: When the scenario has been laid out, the Dungeon Master can consider adding a few subplots to it. In the example above, he might require the characters to undertake a minor expedition to acquire a rare herb that will keep the spirit at bay.

Subplots can also tie the adventure to upcoming ones or tie up loose ends from previous ones.

Pacing: The scenes that make up the plots of a scenario should provide for changes of pace in the story. A scenario composed of all combat scenes quickly becomes dull, no matter how dangerous the enemies are. A good scenario may begin and end on a fast pace, but it should include times where the heroes can rest and recover from the terrors of the world.

In essence, every scenario should feature three general types of scenes. The first of these is a combat scene, in which fast-paced action dominates all aspects of play. The second type of commonly encountered scene centers upon role-playing, requiring the characters to interact with each other and the nonplayer characters. The third type of scene involves a puzzle or riddle of some sort that must be solved before the adventure can continue.

Of course, a given scene can include aspects of two or even three of the above examples. The heroes might have to ferret out some secret from an ancient library while zombies try to fight their way into the room.

Designing a Ravenloft Scene

Once the scenario has been laid out, with all of its plots, villains, and events decided upon, the Dungeon Master must detail the individual scenes that make it up. He should consider the following elements when designing a scene.

Requirements

When designing a scene, the Dungeon Master must keep in mind the events that must come before it. For example, if a scene requires the heroes to battle a creature that can be harmed only by +3 or better magical weapons, they had better acquire such arms before the encounter. By the same token, if the players need to know a magical word to enter an evil shrine, an earlier scene must give them the chance to learn it.

Though this may sound like common sense, it is the sort of thing that often gets overlooked. A good Dungeon Master never takes anything for granted and always tries to foresee the events that precede a scene as well as those that follow after.

References

A Dungeon Master should always have the materials he will need for a scene close at hand. If the heroes are going to battle wolfweres, then he should have a copy of the Monstrous Manual page describing those beasts in his hand when the scene opens. If he needs a map, it should be just as accessible. If a certain rule is likely to be invoked, like a madness check, then he should clearly understand those mechanics and have them ready for use.

Not only do such preparations save time during play, they actually help the storyline. If the Dungeon Master has to stop the game to look for a missing sheet, then he loses all of the build-up that preceded the scene. Whenever the players find themselves distracted from the game for any reason, the whole scenario suffers.

Descriptions

In published adventures, most scenes begin with a bit of boxed text that the Dungeon Master can read aloud to his players. This gives them a chance to close their eyes and visualize the scene before their characters. If the description is especially vivid, they may even find themselves sporting a few goose bumps.

A good description should do more than describe what the player characters see. The Dungeon Master should take care to include at least one other sense. He should not just tell the players how desolate the beach is, he should mention the rhythmic crashing of the surf or the bitter, salty smell of the air. Each additional element added to a scene increases both the drama of the adventure and the enjoyment of the players.

Resolution

Of course, the Dungeon Master has some idea of how he expects a scene to be played out. Whether it is a combat, problem-solving, or role-playing encounter, the heroes should have a goal and a possible route to it.

In designing the scene, however, the Dungeon Master should consider what happens if the players do something unusual. Suppose they try to smash down a door that they are not intended to go through. What is beyond it? What if they fail to notice a given clue or draw the wrong conclusions from what seem to be obvious facts? Planning for these contingencies prevents headaches during game time.

Conclusion

When all is said and done, the Dungeon Master needs to know where the scene goes from here. This is especially true if the heroes have somehow gotten off the path of the adventure.

Designing a Ravenloft Campaign

Earlier, it was mentioned that a campaign is nothing more than a linked series of scenarios. In a general sense, this is certainly the case. However, Dungeon Masters should include a few more elements in order to make the campaign more vital and gripping for the players.

The Dungeon Master can make the campaign more satisfying by including an overall goal for the heroes. Even if he has no plans to allow the player characters to accomplish this great feat in the near future, it should be made evident. It's even possible that characters never complete their quest.

Of course, the Dungeon Master may wish to design the campaign so as to allow the heroes to complete this goal. Perhaps they spend many adventures hunting down evil fiends only to discover that a single being masterminded all that they have experienced. When they confront and (hopefully) defeat this archfiend, they feel a great sense of accomplishment and excitement.

If a Dungeon Master intends his campaign to be finite, he will have to make sure that the grand finale lives up to the promise. If they fight their way through armies of undead, solve countless macabre puzzles, and survive dozens of cunning death traps only to defeat the master villain with a single crossbow bolt, the players will feel sorely disappointed.

In the wake of the climax, the Dungeon Master must have an idea of what comes next. Do the heroes retire from adventuring now and take up farming? If so, he can start a new campaign with new characters. If the players are very attached to their characters (a likely possibility), the Dungeon Master may want to consider carrying them over into a new campaign.

Whatever decisions are made, they must be acceptable to both the Dungeon Master and his players. Remember, a Ravenloft campaign is a game, and games are meant to be fun.

Appendix

Enemies of Darkness

The awful event was very sudden,
and wholly unexpected.
I was pourng something from one
test-tube to another, and West was busy
over th alchocol blast-lamp which had to
answerfor a Bunsen burner in this gasless
editice, when from the pitch-black room we
had left there burst the most appailing
and daemonic succession of cries
that either of us had ever heard.
Not more unutterable could hav been the
chaosof hellish sound if the pit itself had
opened to release the agony of the damned,
for in one inconceivable cacophonywas
centered all the supernal terror and
unnatural despair of animate nature.
Human it could not have been –
it is not in man to make such sounds...


– H.P. Lovecraft
Herbert West – Reanimator

Ability Scores

The process by which players create characters for the RAVENLOFT campaign setting is not markedly ifferent from that used in most other AD&D games. Still, Dungeon Masters and players should be aware of a few minor changes and preferred methods present in this setting. Please note that the Player's Handbook and Dungeon Master Guide are still necessary to play or referee this game if you wish to refer back to basic mechanics, optional systems, and game-term definitions.

The Six Ability Scores

The six ability scores are Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. For normal folk, the numbers assigned to these abilities range from 3 to 18, which is the possible spread of totals obtained by rolling three six-sided dice. Exceptional creatures, most frequently monsters and other supernatural beings, have scores that fall above this range while only those with exceptional handicaps have ratings below it. The first step in creating characters for use in any AD&D campaign is the generation of these six ability scores.

The core AD&D game rules present several methods for the determination of the numerical values assigned to a character's abilities. The preferred dice rolling technique for fashioning Ravenloft characters is Method V from the Player's Handbook. To summarize this procedure, the player rolls 4d6, discarding the lowest die and totaling the remaining three. He repeats the process until six scores have been obtained. Once this is done, the player assigns the rolled values to his abilities as he desires.

Secondary Characteristics

Each ability score is used to calculate a number of secondary characteristics. These serve to further define the abilities and limitations that govern the actions of the character during play. For example, a character's Strength score determines the amount of weight that he can lift or his chances of breaking down a locked door.

General Rating

To give new players and Dungeon Masters a feeling for exactly where a given ranking places their character in the scheme of things, **Table 39: Ability Score Descriptions** gives new players and Dungeon Masters a feeling for exactly where a given ranking places their character in the scheme of things.

Unusually Low Scores

Many garners feel that only characters with exceptional ability scores are worth playing. Any time they generate a hero without at least one 18 rating, they feel cheated. After all, the AD&D game is not about average people, it is about heroes (and most heroes have high ability scores). To be sure, this argument has some merit.

Table 39: Ability Score Descriptions

Ability Score	General Description
0	Not applicable to the character

1	So low as to be almost unmeasurable
2	Below human minimum
3	Functional human minimum
4	Impaired in a major fassion
5	Impaired in a minor fassion
6	Well below human average
7	Below human average
8	Low human average
9	Human average
10	Human average
11	High human average
12	Above human average
13	Well above human average
14	Among the best in the village
15	Among the best in the city
16	Among the best in the region
17	Among the best in the nation
18	Among the best in the world
19	Beyond the limits of normal man
20	Beyond the limits of heroic man
21	Surpassing superhuman levels
22	The equal of the demigods
23	The equal of the lesser gods
24	The equal of the gods
25	The equal of the greater gods

Still, the game system is designed to give each player a character who is both unique and heroic. Rolling four dice instead of three to generate ability scores, for example, reduces the chances of generating a character with all substandard ability scores. In addition, class abilities make player characters stand out from the rest of humanity.

Players are advised to try their hand at whatever characters they create, even if their ability scores do not meet their expectations. Fiction is full of examples of heroes who were wanting in one or two of these ratings. Indeed, some of the most intriguing fictional characters are all the more heroic because they persevere in light of their shortcomings.

Strength (Str)

A character's Strength score measures his physical power and musculature. Those with higher ratings can lift greater weights and wield deadlier weapons.

Exceptional Strength: Warrior characters (including paladins and rangers) who have a Strength score of 18 are exceptionally powerful. Players of such characters should roll 1d100 (generating a number between 01 and 00) and append the result to their Strength scores. Thus, if a player rolled 57, he would record his character's Strength score as 18(57).

Melee Adjustment: Known as "hit probability" in the Player's Handbook, this adjustment applies to any attack roll made by a character during melee combat. Stronger characters receive bonuses (positive numbers) while weaker ones receive penalties (negative numbers).

Damage Adjustment: This modifier applies to damage inflicted by any melee attack made by a character. Some missile weapons (like bows) and thrown weapons (like spears) receive this bonus also.

Weight Allowance: This column indicates the weight (in pounds) that a character can carry without being encumbered.

Maximum Press: This is the greatest weight (in pounds) that a character can lift above his head. A character holding such a weight cannot move more than a few steps and can perform this feat for no more than one round.

Open Doors: This is the number (on 1d20) that a character must roll (equal to or below) in order to force open a heavy or stuck door. Exceptionally strong characters have a chance (in parenthesis) to force open locked, barred, or magically held doors as well. Each attempt takes one round.

Bend Bars/Lift Gates: This is the percentage chance that a character has of prying apart iron bars or lifting a portcullis. A character uses this whenever he attempts a task that tests the limits of human strength.

Table 40: Strength

Ability Score	Melee Adj.	Dmg Adj.	Weight Allow.	Max. Press	Open Doors	Bend Bars/ Lift Gates
1	-5	-4	1	3	1	0%
2	-3	-2	1	5	1	0%
3	-3	-1	5	10	2	0%
4-5	-2	-1	10	25	3	0%
6-7	-1	-	20	55	4	0%
8-9	-	-	35	90	5	1%
10-11	-	-	40	115	6	2%
12-13	-	-	45	140	7	4%
14-15	-	-	55	170	8	7%
16	-	+1	70	195	9	10%
17	+1	+1	85	220	10	13%
18	+1	+2	110	255	11	16%
18/01-50	+1	+3	135	280	12	20%
18/51-75	+2	+3	160	305	13	25%
18/76-90	+2	+4	185	330	14	30%
18/91-99	+2	+5	235	380	15(3)	35%
18/00	+3	+6	335	480	16(6)	40%
19	+3	+7	485	640	16(8)	50%
20	+3	+8	535	700	17(10)	60%
21	+4	+9	635	810	17(12)	70%
22	+4	+10	785	970	18(14)	80%
23	+5	+11	935	1130	18(16)	90%
24	+6	+12	1235	1440	19(17)	95%
25	+7	+14	1535	1750	19(18)	99%

Dexterity (Dex)

Dexterity measures both hand-eye coordination and speed of reflexes. It also determines a character's ability to perform intricate work or use his innate acrobatic talents. Archers and crossbowmen depend upon their Dexterity scores, as do scouts, assassins, and thieves.

Reaction Adjustment: This modification applies to a character's surprise roll. A positive adjustment indicates a bonus, while a negative number indicates a penalty.

Missile Attack Adjustment: This adjustment applies to the attack roll made whenever a character attempts to hit an enemy (or target) with a bow, crossbow, or other missile weapon. It is also used in attacks with a spear, dart, or similar thrown weapon. A positive number increases the chances of hitting the target.

Defensive Adjustment: This is a modification applied to a character's Armor Class because of his natural agility. A negative number provides a bonus, as a lower Armor Class is better than a high one. The normal AC for an unarmored human or demihuman character is 10 (before this adjustment is applied).

Table 41: Dexterity

Ability Score	Reaction Adj.	Missile Attack Adj.	Defensive Adj.
1	-6	-6	+5
2	-4	-4	+5
3	-3	-3	+4
4	-2	-2	+3
5	-1	-1	+2
6	0	0	+1
7-14	0	0	0
15	0	0	-1
16	+1	+1	-2
17	+2	+2	-3
18	+2	+2	-4
19	+3	+3	-4
20	+3	+3	-4
21	+4	+4	-5
22	+4	+4	-5
23	+4	+4	-5
24	+5	+5	-6
25	+5	+5	-6

Constitution (Con)

A character's Constitution score rates his health and resistance to pain, injury, and fatigue. Characters with a high Constitution score have more hit points than others and survive longer in combat or similar situations.

Hit Point Adjustment: This is the bonus (if positive) or penalty (if negative) applied to each die that a player rolls to determine his character's hit points. Parenthetical entries apply only to members of the warrior group, as all other characters have a maximum bonus of +2 points per die.

System Shock: The indicated number is the chance that a character with a given Constitution score will survive a major physical trauma. Examples of such dire happenings include polymorphing, petrification (or its reversal), or magical aging.

Resurrection Survival: This is the percentage chance that a character has of surviving an attempt to magically restore life to his body once he has died. Should this roll fail, a character can never again be raised from the dead (except by use of a wish spell or similar magic).

It is worth noting that, depending upon the nature of power used to attempt resurrection, a character may have a chance of becoming an undead creature instead of returning to life. Such mishaps are described under the various spell descriptions found in Chapter Eight and Nine.

Poison Save Adjustment: Truly exceptional characters (those with unusually high or low Constitution scores) may have a penalty or bonus applied to their saving throws vs. poison. This adjustment is not applied to dwarves, halflings, or other characters with special resistance to poisons.

Regeneration Rate: Characters with very high Constitution scores heal at a supernaturally fast rate. Such rapid recovery is known as regeneration and is invaluable to a badly wounded character. Injuries from fire or acid cannot be regenerated and heal at normal rates.

Table 42: Constitution

Ability Score	Hit Point Adj.	System Shock	Ressur. Surv.	Poison Save	Regen. Rate[4]
1	-3	25%	30%	-2	0
2	-2	30%	35%	-1	0
3	-2	35%	40%	0	0
4	-1	40%	45%	0	0
5	-1	45%	50%	0	0
6	-1	50%	55%	0	0
7	0	55%	60%	0	0
8	0	60%	65%	0	0
9	0	65%	70%	0	0
10	0	70%	75%	0	0
11	0	75%	80%	0	0
12	0	80%	85%	0	0
13	0	85%	90%	0	0
14	0	88%	92%	0	0
15	+1	90%	94%	0	0
16	+2	95%	96%	0	0
17	+2(+3)	97%	98%	0	0
18	+2(+4)	99%	100%	0	0
19	+2(+5)	99%	100%	+1	0
20	+2(+5)[1]	99%	100%	+1	6
21	+2(+6)[2]	99%	100%	+2	5
22	+2(+6)[2]	99%	100%	+2	4
23	+2(+6)[3]	99%	100%	+3	3
24	+2(+7)[3]	99%	100%	+3	2
25	+2(+7)[3]	100%	100%	+4	1

[1] Any 1 rolled for Hit Points is considered a 2.
[2] Any 1 or 2 rolled for Hit Points is considered a 3.
[3] Any 1, 2 or 3 rolled for Hit Points is considered a 4.
[4] Number of turns to regain 1 Hit Point.

Intelligence (Int)

A character's Intelligence rating expresses his logical problem solving ability, reasoning skills, and memory.

Bonus Proficiencies: Since players of the RAVENLOFT setting are assumed to use the optional proficiency rules

introduced in the Player's Handbook, the category once known as "Number of Languages" has been renamed "Bonus Proficiencies". This column indicates the number of nonweapon proficiency slots available to a character (beyond those assigned because of his class). The proficiency rules are detailed in Appendix Five: Character Proficiencies.

Spell Level: This column indicates the highest level of wizard spells available to characters with the given Intelligence. This applies to wizards and characters of other classes who have the ability to employ wizard spells.

Chance to Learn Spell: This is the percentage chance that the character can master a spell when he studies it.

Maximum Number of Spells per Level: The Intelligence of a character limits the number of spells of a given level that he can add to his spell book. For example, a character with an Intelligence of 13 can have no more than nine spells of a given level in his spell book. Once a character reaches this maximum, he cannot learn any new spells of a given level. It is not possible to "unlearn" already acquired spells and replace them with newly discovered ones.

Spell Immunity: Characters of exceptionally high Intelligence are unaffected by illusions of various levels. The number in this column indicates the highest level of illusion to which the character is immune. Thus, someone with an Intelligence score of 20 cannot be fooled by illusions of less than 3rd level.

Table 43: Intelligence

Ability Score	Bonus Prof.	Spell Level	Chance to Learn Spell	Max. # of Spells per Level	Illusion Immunity
1	0	-	-	-	-
2	1	-	-	-	-
3	1	-	-	-	-
4	1	-	-	-	-
5	1	-	-	-	-
6	1	-	-	-	-
7	1	-	-	-	-
8	1	-	-	-	-
9	2	4	35%	6	-
10	2	5	40%	7	-
11	2	5	45%	7	-
12	3	6	50%	7	-
13	3	6	55%	9	-
14	4	7	60%	9	-
15	4	7	65%	11	-
16	5	8	70%	11	-
17	6	8	75%	14	-
18	7	9	85%	18	-
19	8	9	95%	All	1
20	9	9	96%	All	2
21	10	9	97%	All	3
22	11	9	98%	All	4
23	12	9	99%	All	5
24	15	9	100%	All	6

Wisdom (Wis)

Wisdom measures common sense, perception, and piety. A wise character is sought out for advice and respected for his

judgement and sagacity. An intelligent character is not necessarily a wise one, and vice versa.

Magical Defense Adjustment: This adjustment applies to any saving throw in which willpower and mental stamina play an important role. Examples of such saving throws include those mandated by spells like beguiling, charm, fear, hypnosis, illusions, and possession. This bonus is also applied to fear, horror, and madness checks. Negative adjustments are penalties, while positive modifiers are bonuses.

Bonus Spells: Characters who use priest spells and have exceptionally high Wisdom scores can cast more spells than their peers. The entries indicate that an additional priest spell of the listed level can be cast each day. All bonuses are cumulative with those beneath them, so that a priest with a Wisdom of 15 is entitled to two additional 1st-level spells and one extra 2nd-level spell.

Chance of Spell Failure: Priests with low Wisdom scores are not as skilled in spellcasting as their brethren. As such, their spells sometimes fail when cast. A failed spell is expended and counts toward the total number of spells available to a character each day.

Spell Immunity: When a character possesses exceptional Wisdom, he is immune to the effects of certain spells. The letters on the table refer to footnotes below it, which list the spells to which a character is immune. All immunities are, of course, cumulative.

Table 44: Wisdom

Ability Score	Magical Defense Adj.	Bonus Spells	Chance of Spell Failure	Spell Immunity
1	-6	-	80%	-
2	-4	-	60%	-
3	-3	-	50%	-
4	-2	-	45%	-
5	-1	-	40%	-
6	-1	-	35%	-
7	-1	-	30%	-
8	0	-	25%	-
9	0	-	20%	-
10	0	-	15%	-
11	0	-	10%	-
12	0	-	50%	-
13	0	1st	5%	-
14	0	1st	0%	-
15	+1	2nd	0%	-
16	+2	2nd	0%	-
17	+3	3rd	0%	-
18	+4	4th	0%	-
19	+4	1st, 3rd	0%	A
20	+4	2nd, 4th	0%	B
21	+4	3rd, 5th	0%	C
22	+4	4th, 5th	0%	D
23	+4	1st, 6th	0%	E
24	+4	5th, 6th	0%	F
25	+4	6th, 7th	0%	G

A. *Cause fear*, *charm person*, *command*, *friends*, *hypnotism*

B. *Hold person, ray of enfeeblement, scare*
C. *Fear*
D. *Charm monster, confusion, emotion, fumble, suggestion*
E. *Chaos, feeblemind, hold monster, magic jar, quest*
F. *Geas, mass suggestion, rod of rulership*
G. *Antipathy/sympathy, death spell, mass charm*

Charisma (Cha)

A character's Charisma rating reflects a combination of many factors. It measures his personal magnetism, the intensity of his emotions, and his ability to lead, inspire, or intimidate others. Very charismatic souls make for popular and effective leaders, whether they are despots or benefactors of the realm. History's greatest heroes, as well as its most horrible tyrants, have generally been charismatic people.

Maximum Number of Henchmen: Henchmen are nonplayer characters who willingly follow the character.

Loyalty Base: This adjustment applies to the loyalty scores generated for henchmen, hirelings, and other followers. A positive number is a bonus and results in more loyal companions, while a negative number is a penalty.

Initial Reaction: This modifier applies to the roll made when a character first encounters a nonplayer character. More charismatic heroes have bonuses (positive numbers) while others make unmodified rolls or even have penalties (negative adjustments).

Table 45: Charisma

Ability Score	Maximum Henchmen	Loyalty Base	Initial Reaction
1	0	-8	-7
2	1	-7	-6
3	1	-6	-5
4	1	-5	-4
5	2	-4	-3
6	2	-3	-2
7	3	-2	-1
8	3	-1	0
9	4	0	0
10	4	0	0
11	4	0	0
12	5	0	0
13	5	0	+1
14	6	+1	+2
15	7	+3	+3
16	8	+4	+5
17	10	+6	+6
18	15	+8	+7
19	20	+10	+8
20	25	+12	+9
21	30	+14	+10
22	35	+16	+11
23	40	+18	+12

24	45	+20	+13
25	50	+20	+14

Character Races

In the average AD&D campaign, players may choose to fashion heroes from a great many races. These range from the majestic elves of Krynn to the powerful muls of Athas. The diversity of creatures found in these campaigns make for a wonderful study in contrasts, cultures, and talents.

Minimum Ability Requirements

Amid the swirling Mists of the Demiplane of Dread, the demihuman races are far less common. Exactly why this is, no one can say for certain. It may be that the racial paranoia common to many domains has resulted in the attrition of a demihuman population that may have once been far more substantial. After all, in some realms being an elf (or dwarf, or halfling, and so on...) is a crime punishable by death.

For whatever reason, mankind far outnumbers the other intelligent races in Ravenloft. Because of this, players must meet certain criteria before they can make their characters anything but human. If a nonhuman character does not have the ability scores required for the race his player chooses, then the character cannot be of that race.

It is important to note that these minimums apply only to player characters and only during the actual creation of the character. For example, if a later adjustment drops an elf character's Intelligence score to 12 or less, he still remains an elf.

Table 46: Racial Requirements

Race	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
Dwarf	13+	-	15+	-	-	-
Elf	-	15+	-	13+	-	-
Gnome	-	15+	-	-	13+	-
Half-elf	-	13+	-	10+	-	-
Half-Vistani	-	-	-	-	-	-
Halfling	-	15+	13+	-	-	-
Human	-	-	-	-	-	-

Racial Ability Limits

Beyond the limits listed for player characters, minimum and maximum values are assigned to each of the ability scores for each of the available demihuman races. Both player characters and nonplayer characters must have ability scores that fall within these limits. Of course, the Dungeon Master may introduce characters with ability scores that fall above or below these ranges. Encounters with such people should be rare, however, and have a special justification.

Table 47: Racial Ability Limits

Race	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
Dwarf	8-18	3-17	11-18	3-18	3-18	3-18
Elf	3-18	6-18	7-18	8-18	3-18	3-18
Gnome	6-18	3-18	8-18	6-18	3-18	3-18

Half-elf	3-18	6-18	6-18	4-18	3-18	3-18
Half-Vistani	3-18*	3-18	3-18	3-18	3-18	3-18
Halfling	7-18*	7-18	10-18	6-18	3-17	3-18
Human	3-18	3-18	3-18	3-18	3-18	3-18

* Members of this race are not ellgible for exceptional Strength

Dwarves

The race of dwarves is perhaps the rarest of all the demihuman kin in Ravenloft. One of the major concentrations of dwarves known to exist on the Demiplane of Dread is the city of Tempe Falls in Necropolis. Other isolated dwarven communities might exist, especially in the mountainous regions of the Core, but none of these has over one hundred members.



Description

Dwarves are short, stocky folk. On the average, male dwarves stand between three and five feet tall and weigh between one hundred thirty and one hundred seventy pounds. Females average somewhat lighter and shorter than this.

Dwarves live a long time, sometimes reaching an age of three and a half centuries. A newly generated dwarf character is usually fairly young, averaging around fifty or sixty years of age. **Table 48: Dwarf Physical Characteristics** can be used to determine the starting height and weight of a dwarf character.

Table 48: Dwarf Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula
Height, Male	43+1d10 inches
Height, Female	41+1d10 inches
Weight, Male	130+4d10 pounds
Weight, Female	105+4d10 pounds
Starting Age	40+5d6 years
Maximum Age	250+2d100 years

Table 49: Dwarf Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	125	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis
Old (2/3 Base Max.)	167	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	250	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

Male dwarves favor long, braided beards, although they often go bald at a relatively young age. Females braid their hair in long pony tails and often tie ribbons to these braids. Members of both sexes are born with brown or black hair that turns silver, gray, or white before they reach maturity.

Dwarves are dark-featured folk. Their skin ranges from ruddy brown or dark tan to a rich olive, and their eyes are almost uniformly dark brown or even black. Their clothing mirrors this, tending toward earth tones and muted colors.

Adventuring dwarves favor hafted weapons like axes, war hammers, and picks. They almost always wear the heaviest armor available to them. Because the weapons they wield generally require both hands to use, they often forego shields. For melee weapons, dwarves favor the crossbow and pistol - the former because it is a traditional weapon of their people, and the latter because it is loud and has a demoralizing effect on the enemy.

Personality

Like dwarves anywhere, those native to the Demiplane of Dread are stern and rugged. Some say that the dwarf race is the least changed by their time in the Mists. After all, they live underground and are insulated from the terrors of the surface. Others, however, argue that no people know the terrors of Ravenloft better than the dwarves. If the stories of ancient horrors found buried far beneath the Land of the Mists are true, this may well be the case.

The grim and quiet dwarves of Ravenloft have no use for idle chatter and speak only when the situation demands it. They tell no jokes, sing only dirgelike songs, and frown on festivals or holidays. It is easy to understand why many people consider dwarves a dour race. They work hard and cannot abide laziness. So somber a race, it has often been noted, perfectly suits the shadowy realm of Ravenloft.

Dwarves are an avaricious race, fond of gold and other precious metals. Their mines are always run efficiently and make high profits. They also favor strong drink, although this often makes them argumentative and brings about disputes and brawls.

It is difficult to imagine a more loyal friend or tenacious enemy than a dwarf. Anyone lucky enough to befriend one of these proud demihumans will find an ally who stands by him in even the most dangerous of situations. By the same token, however, angering one of these folk is not something undertaken lightly. Dwarf feuds often span decades and even centuries, with heirs often seeking revenge long after the death of the original combatants.

Ravenloft dwarves have much in common with the Viking cultures of some human worlds. As a result, they usually worship the gods of the Norse pantheon. Norse and Scandinavian names, like Gunila, Kallio, and Thorvid are excellent choices for dwarf characters. In addition, every dwarf has an appellation of some sort. Common examples might be "the Bold" or "the Foe Breaker." A typical dwarf changes these titles several times over the course of his life, always striving to reflect his greatest accomplishment.

Ability Scores

The physical stamina of dwarves allows them to increase they drop their starting Constitution scores by one point. Because of their obstinate, suspicious, and dour natures, however, their starting Charisma scores drop by one point.

Special Abilities

Because of their unusual nature, dwarves receive many special abilities not available to other types of characters.

Magic Resistance

Dwarves are nonmagical creatures with little tolerance or use for wizardry (although they do tolerate priests). This innate resistance to magical energies manifests through a bonus to their saving throws vs. rod, staff, or wand and their saving throws vs. spell. **Table 50: Constitution Saving Throw Bonuses** shows the bonus associated with various Constitution

scores.

Table 50: Constitution Saving Throw Bonuses

Ability Score	Save Bonus
1-3	Nil
4-6	+1
7-10	+2
11-13	+3
14-17	+4
18-20	+5
21-24	+6
25	+7

Poison Resistance

Because of their naturally resilient physiology, dwarves receive a similar bonus to saving throws required to resist toxins. (See **Table 50.**)

Combat Bonuses

In melee combat, dwarves gain a +1 bonus to all attack rolls when battling orcs, goblins, half-orcs, and hobgoblins. This reflects the enmity between these races.

Defense Bonuses

When ogres, ogre magi, trolls, giants, or titans strike at dwarves in melee combat, each suffers a -4 penalty to its attack roll. This reflects the skill of dwarves at battling these large creatures.

Infravision

Centuries of living underground have given dwarves extremely acute eyesight that extends into the infrared portion of the spectrum. This enables them to spot heat sources and, in most cases, see clearly in the dark. See Chapter 13 of the DUNGEON MASTER Guide for details on this optional version of infravision. Dwarf infravision functions out to sixty feet, but the glare from torches, lanterns, and other light sources spoils this ability.

Mining Skill

Dwarves are miners of exceptional skill. Because of this, they have many special abilities usable underground. In order to employ one of these abilities, the dwarf must spend one round (or longer, as the situation dictates) examining the area.

Table 51: Dwarf Mining Skill

Dwarves Detect...	...on a 1d6 roll of
Sloping passages and grades	1-5
New tunnel/passage construction	1-5
Sliding/shifting walls or rooms	1-4

Stonework traps (pits, deadfalls, and so on...)	1-3
Their approximate depth underground	1-3

Fearlessness

The stern determination and iron will of the dwarves makes them less vulnerable to fear than other races. Whenever a dwarf character must make a fear check not caused by a magical attack, he gains a +2 bonus to his check. This is in addition to any bonus from a high Wisdom score, so a dwarf with a Wisdom of 16 would have a total bonus of +4.

Magical Item Use

When using magical items not designed specifically for their class or race, dwarves suffer a disadvantage. Magical items have a 20% chance to malfunction when used by a dwarf. This does not affect later uses of the device.

When using items that have an ongoing effect, like a robe of blending, a dwarf makes this check when he first employs the item. If the first check succeeds, he needs to check again only if the object is removed and donned anew. If the check fails, the dwarf must wait twenty-four hours before trying to use the object again.

Magical weapons, armors (including shields), gauntlets, and girdles are not subject to this effect and function normally for the dwarf. This applies to both the continuous and special powers of such items. If a cursed item malfunctions when the dwarf attempts to use it, he senses the hazard and can discard it.

Elves



Elves are a splendid and magical folk, ill-suited to the grim lands of Ravenloft. Despite this, they are more commonly encountered than many of the other demihuman races. This is primarily due to the fact that they can often pass for human and, thus, have escaped some of the hatred and bigotry that most humans on the Demiplane of Dread feel for demihumans.

The largest concentrations of elves in the human realms occupy the cities of Neblus, Nevuchar Springs, and Sidnar, in the domain of Necropolis. The domain of Sithicus is inhabited wholly by elves, but these folk are tied to that land and seldom leave it. Another elf realm, the kingdom of Arak, vanished in the wake of the Grand Conjunction, and its whereabouts remain unknown to this day.

Description

The fair folk, as elves are often called, have elegant, honed features. Perhaps their most notable characteristics are their pointed ears, the distinctly almond shape of their eyes, and the angular brows that slant across their high foreheads.

Elves are much more slender than humans and stand somewhat shorter. On the average, a male elf reaches a height of approximately five feet. Females are generally about half a foot shorter.

A naturally lithe race, male elves seldom weigh more than one hundred ten pounds. Females, who are even more delicate than males, rarely reach one hundred pounds.

Players can use **Table 52: Elf Physical Characteristics** to establish the physical characteristics of a newly created elf character.

Table 52: Elf Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula
Height, Male	55+1d10 inches
Height, Female	50+1d10 inches
Weight, Male	90+3d10 pounds
Weight, Female	70+3d10 pounds
Starting Age	100+5d6 years
Maximum Age	350+4d100 years

Table 53: Elf Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	175	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis
Old (2/3 Base Max.)	233	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	350	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

Virtually all of the fair folk encountered in Ravenloft are high elves. Indeed, apart from the dark elves of Arak, these are the only elves known to exist on the Demiplane of Dread. Of course, other elves appear in Ravenloft from time to time, but these are always travelers drawn by the Mists from other realms.

Ravenloft elves favor light fabrics, such as silks and satins, and prefer pastel colors in their garb. They see the tailor's craft as but another expression of their artistic ability and always dress themselves with refined and cultured style.

Adventuring elves favor lighter armor, seldom wearing anything heavier than chain mail. For weapons, they usually elect to carry blades, especially long swords. Elven weapons and armor are invariably ornate as they, like everything else, are seen as objects of art. Being master archers, they seldom employ any other weapons besides bows for missile combat. They especially disdain guns, finding them far too loud and foul smelling to use.

Personality

In other lands, elves are known for their love of beauty, pursuit of knowledge, and peculiar fascination with magic. While this is true of the fair folk in Ravenloft as well, the persecution that most demihumans suffer when traveling outside of their home communities has led them to act more reserved and secretive than usual.

Ravenloft elves are well aware of the prejudice that most humans carry toward anything unusual or exotic. For that reason, they only reluctantly make their presence known and seldom seek the companionship of humans. Elves remain a reclusive folk who do their best to keep their cities hidden from the prying eyes of men and monsters.

While elves seem to be as rare as dwarves or the other demihuman races, this may not be the case. The reclusive nature of Ravenloft's elves suggests the possibility of elf villages - perhaps even cities - so well camouflaged that mankind has never discovered them.

Elves are great admirers of the natural world. They wonder at the marvels of a lush forest, listen for hours to the babbling of a brook, or breathe in the perfume of spring flowers. Nothing is more splendid to an elf than the tranquility of the forests and the peace of the wild.

While not greedy or covetous, elves also prize works of art and jewelry. This leads them to seek out gems and other objects of great value, though they do so for the splendor of the prize, not its monetary value.

If one were to draw an analogy to human history, elves would be most like the ancient Celtic, Gaelic, or Welsh cultures. Because of that, they usually worship gods from the Celtic pantheon. To be sure, names like Genevieve, Ernan, and Moran are most suited to the elves of Ravenloft.

Ability Scores

Few creatures are as light-footed and graceful as elves. Because of this, they receive a bonus of +1 to their starting Dexterity scores.

Conversely, elves are not as hearty or robust as the other demihuman races. Their light frames and slender builds reduce their starting Constitution scores by one point.

Special Abilities

The elves of Ravenloft, like their kin elsewhere, have many special abilities. These often enable them to survive in places where lesser creatures might perish.

Magic Resistance

Elves have a 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm* spells. This is in addition to any normal saving throws allowed for the spell.

Weapon Expertise

As mentioned above, elves are masterful archers. In addition, they find the grace and style of skilled swordplay to be a joy in itself. Because of this, elves receive a +1 bonus to their attack rolls when using any form of straight bow (that is, not a crossbow). They receive a similar bonus when using short or long swords.

Surprise Bonus

Elves move as silently as hunting cats, often catching their opponents completely off guard. Because of this, an elf imposes a -4 penalty on an opponent's surprise rolls. If an elf must open a door or other portal to reach the foe, this penalty is reduced to -2.

An elf negates this ability by wearing metal armor or traveling in the company of nonelves (other than halflings). In the latter case, the elf must move at least ninety feet away from his companions in order to regain this advantage.

Infravision

Like many demihuman races, elves are gifted with vision that extends into the infrared portion of the spectrum. Elf infravision allows them to see as far as sixty feet in the dark. Items like torches and lanterns spoil this ability with their glare. See Chapter 13 of the DUNGEOH MASTER Guide for further details on this optional version of infravision.

Secret Doors

Elves have an eye for detail that makes it difficult to hide secret or concealed doors from them. In some cases, they will even notice such portals without actively searching for them.

Table 54: Secret/Concealed Doors

Condition of Search	Chance to Find
Passing within 10' of a concealed door	1 in 6
Actively searching for a concealed door	3 in 6
Actively searching for a secret door	2 in 6

Iron Will

Elves, although they often appear to be flighty folk, are difficult to shake. As such, they possess more resistance to mental traumas than most other races. When an elf is called upon to make a madness check during the course of play, he receives a +2 bonus to his roll. This is in addition to any bonus received for exceptional Wisdom.

Gnomes

The diminutive race of gnomes exists in only a few of Ravenloft's domains. The first and greatest of these is the melting pot of Necropolis, where they are the masters of Mayvin, a town of some fifteen hundred citizens. Smaller enclaves of gnomes, numbering only a tenth the size of Mayvin, exist in Valachan, Hazlan, and Nova Vaasa.



Description

Gnomes are an interesting race, often described as a cross between elves and dwarves. While this might indeed describe them physically, it paints an utterly erroneous picture of their ancestry.

The average male gnome is slightly shorter than a dwarf, typically standing just over a yard tall. They are stockier than elves, but not so robust as dwarves, with the average male weighing slightly more than eighty pounds. Females are somewhat smaller and lighter than males.

Players can use **Table 55: Gnome Physical Characteristics** to establish the physical characteristics of a newly created gnome character.

Table 55: Gnome Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula
Height, Male	38+1d6 inches
Height, Female	36+1d6 inches
Weight, Male	72+5d4 pounds
Weight, Female	68+5d4 pounds
Starting Age	60+3d12 years
Maximum Age	200+3d100 years

Table 56: Gnome Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	100	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis
Old (2/3 Base Max.)	133	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	200	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

Gnomes have tan or light-brown complexions and creased, aged-looking skin. Their most noticeable characteristic is a bulbous, almost comical nose. A gnome's eyes shine brightly and are generally gray or pale blue in color. Their hair, which starts as a chestnut brown color in youth, tends to turn gray or white long before they reach maturity. Both males and

females wear their hair long, but the men are not as prone to wear beards as dwarves.

The clothes favored by gnomes are noted for their bright, primary colors and ornate accoutrements. Gnomes wear jewelry, especially those crafted from precious metals and gems, whenever practical. Gnomes are, without a doubt, the most flamboyant dressers on the Demiplane, next to the Vistani.

As adventurers, gnomes are practical folk. They wear heavy armor when the need arises, but favor lighter, more comfortable garb when they can get away with it. They use hafted weapons, as do dwarves, but favor lighter, one-handed versions of such arms. Gnomes who are permitted to use shields (as defined by their choice of character class) almost always do so.

Among the demihuman races of Ravenloft, none is more scarce or misunderstood than the gnome. Like their kin on other worlds, these wiry creatures have a strong sense of humor and are admittedly eccentric. Years of dwelling in the Mists, however, have left them telling jokes and stories mired in the macabre. Gnomes often come off as sinister, frightening folk who make those around them uncomfortable. This is especially true when they decide to pass the time by telling anecdotes with macabre endings or morbid irony.

Personality

Gnomes are a race famed for their quick wit and sly sense of humor. They are inventive and clever, fond of games, puzzles, and riddles. Amid the rolling fog of Ravenloft, however, these traits have become somewhat morbid, tending toward what might be called "graveyard humor." It is, many speculate, this fascination for tricks and trickery that leads so many gnomes to become illusionists.

Human society does not welcome gnomes, so they do not seek the company of men. Indeed, most gnomes look upon mankind as a dangerous and unpredictable race that can never be trusted. They are not usually openly hostile to men, or any demihuman race for that matter, but they are watchful and vigilant when traveling with them. Earning the trust of a gnome is a difficult task but well worth the effort. A gnomish companion can be counted on for advice and loyalty matched only by the dwarves.

Gnomish culture resembles that of the ancient Greeks and Romans in some respects. To be sure, they have no interest in gladiators and legions, but their fondness for philosophy, learning, and academe puts one in mind of the people of Athens in its golden age. The fact that gnomes place a great importance upon the accumulation of knowledge and lore is evident throughout their culture. In player characters, this hunger for enlightenment is a fascination with all things mysterious and a desire to end every adventure more knowledgeable than they were at its beginning.

Gnomish names are similar to those used by the Greeks and Romans. Carina and Verda are popular among gnomish women, while the most common male names are Festus and Tyrus.

Ability Scores

The minds of gnomes are especially keen and inquisitive. For this reason, they are entitled to a +1 bonus to their starting Intelligence scores. By the same token, however, they often allow their curiosity to get the better of them. For this, and other reasons, such characters suffer a one point reduction in their starting Wisdom scores.

Special Abilities

Gnomess possess many of the same special abilities as their dwarf cousins

Magic Resistance

Like dwarves, gnomes are naturally nonmagical creatures with little tolerance or use for wizardry. The exception to this is the magic of illusion, images, and phantasms. For some reason, no doubt a property of their most unusual minds, gnomes make excellent illusionists.

As with dwarves, this innate resistance to magical energies manifests through a bonus to their saving throws vs. rod, staff, or wand and their saving throws vs. spell. See **Table 50** for the bonus associated with various Constitution scores.

Combat Bonuses

In melee combat, gnomes gain a +1 bonus to all attack rolls when battling kobolds and goblins. Few races hate each other with the passion evidenced by these diminutive races.

Defense Bonuses

When gnolls, bugbears, ogres, ogre magi, trolls, giants, or titans strike at gnomes in melee combat, they suffer -4 penalties on their attack rolls. This reflects the skill that gnomes have in battling these large creatures.

Infravision

Gnomes, like dwarves and elves, have extremely acute eyesight that extends into the infrared portion of the spectrum. This enables them to spot heat sources and, in most cases, see clearly in the dark. This infravision functions out to sixty feet, but the glare from torches, lanterns, and other light sources spoils it. See Chapter 13 of the DUNGEON MASTER Guide for further details on this optional version of infravision.

Mining Skill

Gnomes are among the most talented tunnelers known to man. Because of this, they have many special abilities that function underground. In order to use one of these abilities, the gnome must spend one round (or longer, as the situation dictates) examining the area.

Table 57: Gnomish Tunneling Skill

Gnomes Detect...	**...on a roll of...**
Sloping passages and grades	1-5 (on 1d6)
Unsafe walls, floors, and ceilings	1-7 (on 1d10)
Approximate depth underground	1-4 (on 1d6)
Approximate direction of travel	1-3 (on 1d6)

Fearlessness

Gnomes are not easily shaken by things that other races might find macabre or terrible. Because of this, they have +2 bonuses to any horror check that they must make. This is in addition to any bonus for an exceptional Wisdom score.

Magical Item Use

When using magical items not designed specifically for members of their class or race, gnomes suffer a marked disadvantage. Whenever a gnome uses such an item, there is a 20% chance that it will simply fail to operate. A malfunction

does not affect later uses of the device.

When using items that have an ongoing effect, like a cloak of elvenkind, a gnome makes this check when he first uses this item. If the check succeeds, the gnome need not make another check until he removes the object and dons it anew. If the check fails, the gnome must wait twenty-four hours before trying to use the object again.

Magical weapons, armors (including shields), or items that duplicate illusionist or thief abilities (if the character is a thief) are not subject to this effect and function normally for the gnome. This applies to both the continuous and special powers of such items.

If a gnome suffers a magical malfunction when attempting to use a cursed item, he senses the danger of the object and can discard it.

Half-Elves

While marriages between members of different demihuman races are rare, they are not unheard of. The most common of these unusual unions occurs between elves and humans. Children born to such a couple are half-elves, and they often lead difficult lives.



Exactly what criteria defines a half-elf is open to debate. In general, it must be remembered that someone is considered an elf only if he has absolutely untainted elf ancestry. The smallest fraction of human blood makes one an outcast from the fair folk. If a person has more human ancestors than elves, he is considered to be human, although his features may retain a hint of this ancestry. Thus, it is quite possible for a human character to have one or more elf ancestors.

Thus, in order to qualify as a half-elf, a character must possess an equal mix of human and elven blood or have more elf ancestry than human.

Description

Half-elves are fair of both complexion and hair. They tend to have silver, blonde, or light-brown hair and generally favor elven features. Their eyes are blue, gray, or very light brown.

Members of this race can generally pass for either human or elf. In the latter case, they are taken to be rather robust and in the former, they appear somewhat slight. The typical half-elf male stands just under seventy inches in height and weighs roughly one hundred twenty-five pounds.

Half elves do not have the great lifespans of their elf parents but do tend to reach ages greater than those aspired to by men. The years generally claim a half-elf sometime after his one hundred thirtieth birthday.

Players can use **Table 58: Half-Elf Physical Characteristics** to generate the height, weight, and age of a newly created half-elf character.

Table 58: Half-Elf Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula
Height, Male	60+2d6 inches
Height, Female	58+2d6 inches
Weight, Male	110+3d12 pounds
Weight, Female	85+3d12 pounds
Starting Age	15+1d6 years

Maximum Age 125+3d20 years

Table 59: Half-Elf Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	62	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis
Old (2/3 Base Max.)	83	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	125	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

Personality

Half-elves are rare in Ravenloft, just as they are in most campaign settings. Given the fact that the few elves who dwell on the Demiplane of Dread generally shun all contact with mankind, it is easy to see why these crossbreeds are almost unheard of.

Ravenloft's half-elves are looked upon as freaks in both human and elf cultures. Such treatment tends to drive these folk away from both of their parent races and forces them into nomadic or hermitlike existences. While they are more accepted in human society, they still find that many men and women look upon them with mistrust and pity. A half-elf is almost never considered the equal of a true man, even in the most open-minded cities of the Demiplane. Indeed, less civilized realms often slay or enslave half-elves.

The fact that they are not accepted anywhere in Ravenloft affects half-elves in two ways. First, they tend to reject the notion of long-term friendships. No one trusts a half-elf, so a half-elf trusts no one. Second, half-elves know that xenophobic humans have been known to burn or hang those they fear. As such, they live every moment knowing that it could be their last. This doesn't mean that half-elves live in fear of death, only that they live in anticipation of it. The distinction may seem a subtle one, but to half-elves it is very important.

With these facts in mind, it is easy to understand why half-elves tend to be loners. With few places willing to accept them or treat them with equality, they often become wanderers. Because of the way they have been treated, many half-elves are quick to anger when they see others being treated cruelly.

Despite this bent to their personalities, half-elves tend to be as curious and artistic as the fair folk. This is often the justification that they use when explaining their wanderings. By traveling the world, they explain, they can see more of its splendors.

Half-elves have no society and no cultural norms. As outcasts, however, they seldom have any use for the names given to them by parents who either would not, or could not, protect them from the cruelty of the world. Most half-elves, therefore, give themselves names like "the Scarlet Wanderer" or "the Friend of Shadows." In many cases, they cannot even remember the true name given to them at their birth.

Ability Scores

Although generally graceful and slender, half-elves are not sufficiently different from humans to merit special ability score adjustments.

Special Abilities

While they do not have all the wondrous abilities that one associates with elves, members of this race are not without their own gifts.

Magic Resistance

Half-elves inherit a fraction of the elf resistance to *sleep*- and *charm*-based spells. Because of their diluted elf blood, however, their resistance is only 30%. This is in addition to any normal saving throws allowed for spells of this type.

Infravision

Like their elf ancestors, half-elves are gifted with vision that extends into the infrared portion of the spectrum. Because of this, they see as far as sixty feet in the dark. Items like torches and lanterns spoil this ability with their glare. See Chapter 13 of the Dungeon Master Guide for further details on this optional version of infravision.

Secret Doors

Half-elves have an eye for detail that is every bit the equal of an elf's. This makes it difficult to hide secret or concealed doors from them. Occasionally, they even notice such portals without actively searching for them (see Table 54, page 234).

Iron Will

Half-elves have developed strong wills because of their travels in the Demiplane. They have seen its many horrors and borne the brunt of much injustice and even brutality. Because of this, they gain a bonus of +1 to any fear or horror checks. This is in addition to any normal modifiers for exceptional Wisdom scores.

Halflings

Halflings are considered by many people to be the most humanlike of the demihuman races. Some halflings find this description insulting, but most simply say that it is untrue. Whether the previous statement is true or not matters little. It would, however, explain the fact that halflings are the most common demihuman race on the Demiplane of Dread.



Several of Ravenloft's Core domains contain sizable halfling communities-including the Necropolis cities of Delagia and Rivalis. Many of Ravenloft's larger cities.also have sizable halfling communities, although these are sometimes slums.

Description

Halflings are a diminutive race of demihumans who resemble human children. They have chestnut to dark-brown hair, eyes of similar colors, and tanned complexions. Their faces are rounded, almost chubby looking, and they have broad, friendly features.

The typical male halfling stands in the neighborhood of one yard tall, while females are only slightly shorter. Their solid builds bring their weight in at about sixty-five or seventy pounds for men, and sixty to sixty-five pounds for women. Halflings live to be as old as two hundred years, although few actually pass one hundred fifty years.

Use **Tables 60** and **62** to create a new halfling character for use in a RAVENLOFT campaign.

Table 60: Halfling Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula
Height, Male	32+2d8 inches
Height, Female	30+2d8 inches
Weight, Male	52+5d4 pounds
Weight, Female	48+5d4 pounds
Starting Age	20+3d4 years
Maximum Age	100+1d100 years

Table 61: Halflings Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	50	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis

Old (2/3 Base Max.)	67	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	100	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

Three varieties of halfling exist: Tallfellow, Stouts, and Hairfoots. All three are represented in the Land of the Mists. In addition, crosses between the races are very common. Use **Table 62: Halfling Ancestry** to determine the ancestry of a newly created halfling character.

Table 62: Halfling Ancestry

Die Roll	Heritage
1-15%	Pure Stout
16-30%	Pure Tallfellow
31-45%	Pure Hairfoot
46-60%	Stout & Tallfellow
61-75%	Stout & Hairfoot
76-90%	Tallfellow & Hairfoot
91-100%	Tallfellow, Hairfoot, & Stout

Despite their variations in ancestry, halflings favor similar styles of dress and have generally corresponding customs. Soft, comfortable fabrics dominate halfling dress. They like nice clothes, but they shun the finery of elves. By the same token, they appreciate the need for utilitarian garments but disdain the often spartan garb of the dwarves. In dress, as in all things, comfort is the key concern for any halfling. It is this, no doubt, that leads them to avoid wearing shoes whenever possible.

Personality

Of all the demihuman races in Ravenloft, only halflings can move about freely in the world of men. Even though they are easily distinguished from their taller cousins, halflings are similar enough in appearance and mannerisms to avoid the xenophobia having experienced by most demihumans.

It may be that much of the success halflings have enjoyed in dealing with humans comes from their habit of disappearing. A halfling is generally content to live his life without a great deal of contact with the outside world. As the saying goes, out of sight is out of mind; and halflings are quite content to be both.

Ravenloft's halflings are remarkably similar to their kin on other worlds, having experienced little change by the Mists. The Demiplane's little people are not as outgoing as those on Oerth or Toril, but they do retain a love of good food, a warm hearth, and a comfortable chair.

Halflings enjoy the gentle comforts of the world that many other demihuman races seem to overlook. They do not crave gold like the dwarves; if they have enough money to live comfortably, they are content. The gems and jewels that fascinate gnomes interest them only as curiosities. The high grandeur of a typical elf's lifestyle also has little appeal to them, for it is often so pretentious as to be uncomfortable.

Halfling culture is similar to that of the European countryside. They keep their gardens, raise a few pigs or chickens, and avoid having more to do with outsiders than they can help. Halfling names are similar to those found in old English. Among women, the most popular names are Elvina and Thylda. On the other hand, Hildric and Wynne are very common names for men.

Ability Scores

Halflings are a nimble, agile race, and all characters of this type receive a +1 bonus to their Dexterity score. Their diminutive physical construction, however, results in a -1 penalty to their Strength score.

Special Abilities

The halflings of Ravenloft are a gentle and largely timid folk, as out of place amid the horrors of the Mist as the majestic elves. They possess certain abilities, however, that have enabled them to survive in a land where so many folk perish.

Magic Resistance

Halflings have the same resistance to magic as dwarves. This manifests in a bonus to their saving throws vs. rod, staff, and wand and their saving throws vs. spell. **Table 50** (see page 231) shows the bonus associated with various Constitution scores.

Poison Resistance

Halflings have exceptionally sturdy constitutions and are resistant to poisons. Whenever a halfling is called upon to make a saving throw vs. poison, he receives the same bonus indicated for magic resistance (see **Table 50**).

Combat Bonuses

Halflings have exceptional hand-eye coordination and grow up playing games like darts, stick ball, and ponyshoes. Because of this, they gain a +1 bonus to any attack roll made with a thrown weapon or sling.

Surprise Bonus

Halflings move as silently as elves, often catching their opponents completely off guard. Because of this, a halfling imposes a -4 penalty on his opponents' surprise rolls. If a halfling must open a door or other portal to reach the foe, this penalty is reduced to -2.

Wearing metal armor or traveling in the company of nonhalflings (other than elves) negates this ability. In the latter case, the halfling must move at least ninety feet away from his companions in order to regain this advantage.

Infravision

Depending upon his heritage, a halfling may or may not have infravision (the ability to see clearly in the infrared portion of the spectrum). Table 63: Halfling Infravision details the type of infravision associated with halfling characters of various ancestry. See Chapter 13 in the Dungeon Master Guide for details on this optional version of infravision.

Table 63: Halfling Infravision

Heritage	Infravision
Pure Stout	Normal (60 feet)
Pure Tallfellow	None
Pure Hairfoot	None
Stout & Tallfellow	Limited (30 feet)
Stout & Hairfoot	Limited (30 feet)
Tallfellow & Hairfoot	None

Tallfellow, Hairfoot, & Stout None

Keen Senses (Stouts Only)

Stouts have certain special abilities that other halflings lack. Many theorize that this is the result of dwarf blood assimilated by the race long ago, but the truth of this assertion remains unknown.

Table 64: Stoutish Senses

Ability	Roll
Detect sloping passages	1-3 (on 1d4)
Determine direction	1-3 (on 1d6)

Determination

Halflings, although they are physically small and generally regarded as "soft" by many other races, exhibit determination, stubbornness, and (when events demand it) bravery. This is reflected in bonuses to the various checks that adventuring halflings are called upon to make. **Table 65: Halfling Fear, Horror, and Madness Check Adjustments** indicates these adjustments.

Table 65: Halfling Fear, Horror, and Madness Check Adjustments

Heritage	Fear	Horror	Madness
Stout	+2	-	-
Tallfellow	-	+2	-
Hairfoot	-	-	+2
Stout & Tallfellow	+1	+1	-
Stout & Hairfoot	+1	-	+1
Tallfellow & Hairfoot	-	+1	+1
Tallfellow, Stout & Hairfoot	(+1 to any 2 types of checks)		

Half-Vistani



The Vistani are, in actuality, not a demihuman race. Rather, they are completely human in all regards. Because of the distance that their culture places between them and the rest of Ravenloft's citizens, however, they are best treated as a separate race.

Player characters cannot be pureblood Vistani. Mankind knows little about these wanderers of the Mists, making them unsuitable for use as player characters. Those players who wish to have a Vistana character (Vistana is the singular form of Vistani) must settle for a *giomorgo*, or half-Vistana.

For the purposes of these rules, a giomorgo has one human parent and one Vistana parent. A very rare type of giomorgo, known as the giamarga, spawns from the union of an elf and a Vistana. These are so rare, however, that they are also proscribed as a player character race.

No giomorgo communities exist in Ravenloft. Like half-elves, these folk are outcasts who are not accepted by either of their parent races. From time to time they settle in human lands, but they are almost always so badly treated that they quickly move on or drift into a life of squalor and petty crime.

Description

The giomorgo are easily mistaken for true Vistani. They have dark complexions, ranging from a rich olive to a dusky tan. Their hair is always dark, more often black than brown, as are their eyes. A giomorgo's features are always hawklike and angular, not unlike those common to the folk of Falkovnia.

In size and shape, a half-Vistana appears almost identical to the average human. They do tend to be a bit heavier than normal folk, which reflects their larger frames, but this is an inconsequential difference.

Exactly how long a true Vistana will live is a matter for some debate. While there seems to be little or no reason for them to outlive their human cousins, many reach great ages. Giomorgo, however, are not so endowed and generally live no longer than normal men.

Players can use **Table 66: Half-Vistani Physical Characteristics** to determine the height, weight, and age of a giomorgo player character.

Table 66: Half-Vistani Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula

Height, Male	60+2d10 inches
Height, Female	59+2d10 inches
Weight, Male	150+6d10 pounds
Weight, Female	105+6d10 pounds
Starting Age	15+1d4 years
Maximum Age	90+2d20 years

Table 67: Halflings Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	45	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis
Old (2/3 Base Max.)	60	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	90	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

A given giomorgo favors one of two styles of dress and appearance. Some embrace their gypsy heritage, even though their kindred do not return their feelings. Such folk wear the bright colors and patterns of the Vistani. Although they can pass for Vistani among normal men, any true Vistana will recognize them on sight.

The rest of the giomorgo attempt to lose themselves in the world of men. They wash away their Vistani heritage in the sea of humanity and adopt the dress and demeanor of the land in which they dwell. Again, while they may fool those around them, any Vistani will see through their guise.

Personality

The half-Vistani are cross-breeds like the half-elves, but without the onus associated with those folk. Although they tend to be swarthy and perhaps a bit exotic in looks, no one can say for certain whether someone is a half-Vistana just by looking at him. The reverse is not true of the Vistani themselves, who can tell at a glance whether someone is of pure Vistani blood or not.

Of course, great diversity exists among the giomorgo. Those spawned by any given tribe will tend to be different from the children of another. With those variations in mind, however, the following generalizations can be made.

Most half-Vistani look upon their mixed heritage as a taint that will haunt them for the rest of their life. They fear that their true nature will be revealed. When that happens, of course, they will be branded as freaks and outcasts by even their closest friends. No half-Vistana ever escapes this paranoia, although some hide it better than others.

Countering this lingering fear, however, is an inherent pride in the abilities associated with being a half-Vistana. Most giomorgo characters are unwilling to fully deny their identities. Thus, they favor names similar to those taken by the Vistani themselves. Rumanian and Russian names, like Tara or Natacha (for women) and Bela or Youri (for men).

Indeed, it is not unknown for a half-Vistana to take pride in his heritage and embrace the role of mysterious outsider. While this is an inherently dangerous path to tread, some refuse to hide the truth. People like this often present themselves as mystics and prophets who carry an air of mystery about them that, they hope, will protect them from harm. If they play their cards right, so to speak, their neighbors will be afraid to take action against them.

Most giomorgo characters are embittered souls who have suffered much at the hands of both their parent races. They trust no one and depend only upon themselves. True loners, half-Vistani seldom make real friends. While they may have acquaintances, half-Vistani view these people as temporary associates of convenience who who they will discard as soon as they outlive their usefulness. Few and far between are those whom a giomorgo actually calls friend. To their credit, the giomorgo make no attempt to conceal this facet of their personality. They never claim to be more compassionate than they

are.

Ability Scores

Although human in body, the mind of a half-Vistana is shaped by his unusual heritage. A giomorgo character has his Charisma score reduced by two points because of the enmity with which most other individuals view the Vistani. On the other hand, he receives a +1 bonus to both his Intelligence and Wisdom scores. The latter adjustments reflect the natural advantages of the Vistani mind and the keenness of their sixth sense.

The special powers of the Vistani blood that courses through the veins of a giomorgo enables him to do many things that other men and women cannot. By the same token, however, the fact that this blood is not pure causes half-Vistani to suffer from certain limitations unique to their kind.

Special Abilities

A half-Vistana character can accurately identify the plants and animals of the world, just as druids do. He can also determine whether water is safe to drink. This ability requires no more than one round of examination on the part of the character and always succeeds (barring the influences of magic, curses, domain lords, and such).

Affinity for Nature

All giomorgo characters make fires easily and quickly. Provided that fuel and some means of igniting a blaze is at hand, they can start a fire in 1d4 rounds. Normally restrictive conditions, like damp fuel and such, do not affect the giomorgo abilities.

Fire Building

Half-Vistani are familiar with tralaks (a series of glyphs used by the Vistani). In order to recognize a given symbol, the character must make an Intelligence check. If that check succeeds, the Dungeon Master secretly rolls 1d20. On a roll of 1 to 19, the character correctly identifies the meaning of the tralak. If the roll is a 20, however, the character misreads the symbol and gets its meaning wrong.

Tralaks

The giomorgo are not without their own burdens. Chief among these is the lunatic or moon madness. It is worth noting that full-blood Vistani possess more resistance to this ailment than the giomorgo.

On the three nights of the month when the moon is full, a half-Vistana character will find himself restless and unable to sleep. Because of this, he cannot heal wounds without magical aid and is utterly unable to memorize new spells. The physical toll that this takes on the body imposes a -2 penalty on all saving throws made during this time; this penalty lasts until the character can rest undisturbed for eight hours.

In addition to the above physical effects, the lunatic induces mental trauma as well. On each of the three nights of the full moon, a half-Vistana character must make a successful madness check (described in Chapter Six) or be overcome with this unusual lunacy. A failed check causes the character to gradually take on the aspects of a beast of the night. A single failed check means that the half-Vistana slips away from his companions to run wild under the stars. A second failed check indicates that the giomorgo also becomes aggressive and even violent during these wild times. Should he fail all three of his madness checks, the character has the mind of a wild, violent savage until the moon changes its phase.

Tribal Abilities

Depending upon the tribe to which his Vistana parent belonged, a giomorgo character will have certain special abilities. In most cases, a player can select which tribe his character descends from. Those who are unfamiliar with the Vistani, or those simply willing to trust fate, can roll on **Table 68: Vistani Ancestry** instead.

Table 68: Vistani Ancestry

1d100 Roll	Tribal Heritage
01-40	Kamii
41-60	Equaar
61-80	Vatraska
81-90	Naiat
91-97	Corvara
98-99	Canjar
00	Zarovan

Kamii: Characters from this bloodline tend to be quiet and reserved. Certainly, they are the least confrontational of all the tribes and go out of their way to avoid potentially hostile encounters. Most Kamii player characters (about 60%) are thieves and use the stealth and cunning that mark this class to their best advantage. The remaining 40% of the Kamii are warriors, although they enter battle only as a last resort. Kamii characters are never wizards, priests, or any other type of spellcaster.

The Kamii are excellent metalworkers, and all characters of this type begin play with the blacksmith proficiency. They can also identify metals, just as a druid does plants or animals, and can recognize the realm from which any metal item in Ravenloft originates. If it was forged beyond the Mists, on Krynn or Faerun, for example, the character has a 5% cumulative chance per level to identify its world (or plane) of origin. If an item was manufactured by a Vistana, a Kamii character has a 25% of detecting any curse upon it before it affects him.

Equaar: Equaarians are a nature-loving folk who often become rangers, although other classes are not closed to them. All Equaar characters begin play with the animal lore and land-based riding proficiencies without expending any slots for them. They can also purchase the tracking proficiency by allocating a single slot to it, regardless of their chosen class.

Vatraska: Known for their skill as healers and herbalists, the Vatraskan player character tends to be cold and somewhat condescending. Despite their natural gift for healing, these characters are seldom priests. No other restrictions are placed upon their choice of character classes. All members of this class automatically begin play with the herbalism proficiency and can purchase the healing proficiency at the cost of only one slot, regardless of their chosen class.

Vatraskan characters can identify poisons as easily as a druid might recognize a specific type of plant. In addition, they can concoct an antidote to any poison if they have access to a store of herbs or plants and have ten minutes (one turn) to work. Because these antidotes are very powerful, the recipient must make a successful saving throw vs. poison or die from them. Thus, the cure can sometimes be worse than the poison.

In addition to their skill with antidotes, Vatraskan characters can create an herbal sleeping draught. They must spend 1d6+1 days gathering the herbs and concocting the draught, which can actually take the form of either a liquid or a powder. This toxin, though odorless and tasteless, turns water slightly red. Once ingested, this chemical forces the imbiber to make a successful saving throw vs. poison or fall asleep for 1d4 hours. The sleep is normal enough, and the victim can be awakened easily after the first hour has passed. When the character uses this ability, he creates 1d4 doses of this potion, which retains its potency for only seven days.

Naiat: Characters of this stock are a flamboyant and outgoing folk. They favor fine food and drink in the company of the opposite sex. Naiat characters tend to be of the gypsy class.

All Naiat characters automatically begin play with the singing and dancing proficiencies and can purchase the musical instrument skill just as if they were bards. If the character opts to take advantage of this latter ability and specializes in the violin, he can use it to affect the reactions of nonplayer characters and inspire his allies, just as a bard does. The great charm of Naiat characters entitles them to a +1 bonus on rolls to determine the initial reaction of any nonplayer character they meet. If the character goes out of his way to friendly (and the player does a good job role-playing the meeting), this bonus increases to +2.

Corvara: Most Corvara characters are thieves, although a few (about one in ten) opt to become fighters or wizards. No other classes are open to them.

Corvara distrust strangers and tend to look for profit in everything they do. "What's in it for me?" is a common question among these folk. All Corvara characters, regardless of class, begin play with the set snares proficiency, and Corvara thieves gain a +10% bonus to their pick locks skill.

Canjar: Characters of Canjar blood are aloof and prideful. Canjar characters must always be wizards. They are talented magicians and have a covetous love of magical items and spells. When they come into possession of new spells or artifacts, they guard them jealously and share them with no one.

Canjar wizards can leave one 1st- and one 2nd-level spell slot open each day. That is, a wizard with the ability to memorize four 1st-level spells would select only three of them. The remaining slots can be used as needed during the course of the day. The wizard can cast any spell that he has recorded in his spell books, just as if he had memorized it.

In actuality, the character is assumed to have memorized the spell normally. The natural sensitivity of the character allowed him to pick a spell that he felt he would need during the day.

Zarovan: The Zarovan are a quiet and introspective folk. They have little to do with anyone and make miserable traveling companions. While they will not betray those who travel with them, they will not take any chances on a companion's trustworthiness either. They do things for their own reasons and never share their motives, plans, or desires with anyone else. Like the Canjar, all characters of this bloodline are classed as wizards. No more than one of these characters travels with any given group of adventurers.

The most fascinating aspect of the Zarovan is their assertion that they are adrift in time. It is not uncommon for these folk to answer a question before it is asked or, conversely, to have greatly delayed reaction times.

This effect is most obvious during combat (or other situations when an initiative roll is required). At such times, a player with a Zarovan character should roll 1d6 and Id 10. The ten-sided die indicates an adjustment applied to the character's initiative roll. If the roll of the six-sided die is low (a 1,2, or 3), then the character is a bit ahead of everyone else and the roll of the ten-sided die is subtracted from the initiative roll. If the roll of the six-sided die is high (a 4, 5, or 6), the Zarovan is lagging a bit behind everyone else and the result of the ten-sided die is added to his initiative roll. If the modified initiative number is greater than ten, then the character acts last in that round.

Humans

By far the most common race inhabiting the Demiplane of Dread, human characters are the standard by which all others are judged.



Description

Humans are the shortest lived of any demihuman races. Seldom does one of these folk live to see the age of one hundred years, even in less sinister places than the Demiplane of Dread. The average Ravenloft human male stands about six feet tall and weighs one hundred seventy pounds. Females are shorter and lighter, as a rule. **Table 69: Human Physical Characteristics** can be used to determine the height, weight, and other characteristics of a human character.

Table 69: Human Physical Characteristics

Trait	Formula
Height, Male	60+2d10 inches
Height, Female	59+2d10 inches
Weight, Male	140+6d10 pounds
Weight, Female	100+6d10 pounds
Starting Age	15+1d4 years
Maximum Age	90+2d20 years

Table 70: Human Aging Effects

Age	Years	Effects
Middle (1/2 Base Max.)	45	-1 Srt/Con; +1 Int/Wis
Old (2/3 Base Max.)	60	-2 Str/Dex; -1 Con; +1 Wis
Venerable (Base Max.)	90	-1 Str/Dex/Con; +1 Int/Wis

The men and women of Ravenloft range from the fair-skinned folk of Dementlieu or Richemulot to the ruddy, olive complexions of the men and women of Hazlan and Nova Vaasa. Hair and eye color also vary greatly from one realm to another. Within the confines of reason, a player is free to describe his human character however he wishes (subject to Dungeon Master approval).

The clothes worn by the inhabitants of various domains reflects the nature of life in a given region. The sections of this book describing the various domains include specific types of clothing, arms, and armor for each realm. When a player creates a character from Ravenloft, he should describe his character in a manner suited to his homeland. Minor deviations are okay, but most of Ravenloft's folk are conservative and somewhat xenophobic, so any marked change or highly eccentric variation should be approved by the Dungeon Master.

Personality

Although humans are the most diverse race in Ravenloft, it is possible to make some general comments them.

As a people, those native to the Demiplane of Dread are far more xenophobic and suspicious than their peers on other worlds. No matter where in Ravenloft they hail from, people have learned to mistrust strangers and fear the unknown. Anything different is, by definition, potentially dangerous and frightening.

Although individual customs vary from domain to domain, every region of this shadowy land is rich with traditions and practices believed to repel (or lure) bad luck, evil spirits, ghouls, and so on. So intense is the belief in the supernatural that it even overshadows the typical person's prejudice to outsiders. In most cases, the superstitions of a stranger will be respected. To do less is to invite disaster. After all, the newcomer might know something you do not.

Because the various realms of Ravenloft are drawn from a multitude of places, any period in history or social structure is likely to be found somewhere in the Mists. As one might expect, any individual's outlook on life (and death) is largely based upon the values of his society.

Perhaps the most important element of human psychology in Ravenloft concerns the mysterious Vistani. The men and women of Ravenloft almost universally distrust these traveling gypsies and make them ready scapegoats for any mystery or unsolved crime.

Ability Scores

For all their differences in dress, behavior, and physical appearance, people are people. As such, no special adjustments are made to a human character's ability scores.

Special Abilities

The men and women of Ravenloft are not gifted with infravision or otherwise able to do things that human beings from other lands find impossible. This is not to say, however, that no difference exists between a person born in Lamordia and another person raised in Zherisia. Chapters Two, Three, and Four contain character adjustments that reflect the nature of life in Ravenloft's domains.

Character Classes

All AD&D game characters, including those found in RAVENLOFT campaigns, are divided into four groups. These are warriors, wizards, priests, and rogues.

In addition, an assortment of classes are available to each of these basic groups. For example, warrior characters can choose to be fighters, rangers, or avengers. In order to qualify for some classes, certain racial and ability score requirements must be met.

Certain classes available in other lands, like the gladiators of Athas or the paladins of Toril, are not native to the Demiplane of Dread. This is not to say that such folk are not encountered in Ravenloft, only that they must come into the campaign via the actions of the Mists or some other macabre agent.

Overview

In order to make the task of character generation easier, capsule descriptions of various groups and classes are presented below. Far more detailed entries on each of these professions follow.

Warriors

Warriors are the fighting men and women of the Demiplane. They have trained themselves in the arts of war and can hold their own against the creatures of the night by means of sword and shield.

Fighters

This class of character includes all manner of general fighting men, from members of the town watch and huntsmen to elite mercenaries and knights. A warrior character who does not fall into any other class is considered a fighter.

Rangers

Rangers are warriors with strong ties to nature and the wilderness. Members of this class include barbarians, woodsmen, huntsmen, scouts, and explorers.

Avengers

Warriors of this type are driven by a need to exact vengeance for some great wrong done to them, their families, or their people. They are stern and often bitter people who train in battle for the day when they will come face to face with an ultimate enemy. They have accepted death as the probable outcome of their quest and show little fear in the face of even the greatest danger.

Wizards

Characters of this group skillfully practice the arcane arts. They can weave a great variety of spells, and their superior

intelligence makes them valuable additions to any group of stalwart adventurers.

Mages

Mages are the most commonly encountered type of wizard characters. They have a general knowledge of magic and its applications that makes them valuable in almost any situation.

Specialists

Specialist wizards focus their studies on a single type of magic. Examples of these spellcasters include illusionists, who deal in images and phantasms, and necromancers, who master the dark magic of the dead and undead.

Elementalists

The elementalist is a type of specialist wizard who uses the natural forces of the universe to achieve certain effects. These forces are broken down into four different elements or schools: air, earth, fire, and water.

Arcanists

The arcanist is a class of wizard found only on the Demiplane of Dread. These spellcasters are divided into one of three types, based upon the nature of their magic. They range from the white arcanist, who uses his magic only for good and healing, to the black arcanist, who draws upon the darkest of powers to spread death and suffering.

Priests

This group is made up of holy men and women who seek to spread the beliefs of their chosen deity to the rest of the world. Because of their faith and devotion, priests work spells in a manner similar to that employed by wizards.

Clerics

Clerics are holy men who labor for causes that they believe will benefit the causes of their faith. They are the most commonly encountered type of priest on the Demiplane of Dread.

Anchorites

Anchorites are religious hermits found only on the Demiplane of Dread. They draw their powers from the land itself and, with the exception of the Vistani, are probably the people most aware of the true nature of Ravenloft and its dark mysteries.

Rogues

Rogues are perhaps the most diverse type of character found in the AD&D game or RAVENLOFT campaign setting. They range from noble sorts who, as they say, "steal from the rich and give to the poor," to vile assassins who profit from the deaths of important personages. Scouts, burglars, spies, and swashbucklers all fall into this category. Rogues are skilled at picking locks, hiding in shadows, and other aspects of stealth and slyness.

Thieves

The most common type of rogue character is the thief. These individuals commonly make their living by helping themselves to things that do not belong to them. Sometimes, greed and avarice motivate them. Most player characters, however, behave somewhat more nobly than that.

Gypsies

While the most famous folks of this sort in Ravenloft are the Vistani, they are certainly not the only wanderers who might be called gypsies. Scattered tribes of men and women live the nomadic life of the gypsy, although they do not share the wondrous powers of the Vistani. Of course, they are often every bit as persecuted as the wanderers of the Mist they emulate.

Psionicists

This optional character class uses the powers of the mind to accomplish great things. Not only can psionicists read the thoughts of others, but they can also divine the future, move objects by their will alone, and more.

Class Ability Score Requirements

In order to quality tor membership ir a character must meet certain abilit requirements. **Table 71: Ability Score Minimums** summarizes these requirements.

Table 71: Ability Score Minimums

Character Class	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha
Fighter	9+	-	-	-	-	-
Ranger	13+	13+	14+	-	14+	-
Avenger	15+	14+	15+	-	-	-
Mage	-	-	-	9+	-	-
Specialist	Var	Var	Var	Var	Var	Var
Elementalist	-	-	-	9+	-	-
Arcanist	-	-	-	15+	15+	-
Cleric	-	-	-	-	9+	-
Anchorite	-	-	-	-	12+	15+
Thief	-	9+	-	-	-	-
Gypsy	-	-	13+	13+	13+	15+
Psionicist	-	-	11+	12+	15+	-

Racial Class Limits

While many of the demihuman races have special abilities not available to human characters, their choice of character classes is somewhat restricted. Only humans, the most versatile and adaptive of all the demihuman and humanoid folk, have unlimited access to all character classes. **Table 72: Racial Class Limitations** indicates classes that a character of a given race may opt for.

Dungeon Masters may wish to limit how high certain races advance in a given class. For guidelines on how to do so, see Chapter 2: Player Character Races in the Dungeon Master Guide.

Table 72: Racial Class Limitations

Character Class	Dwarf	Elf	Gnome	Half-Elf	Halfling	Half-Vistana	Human
Fighter	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	*	Y
Ranger	-	Y	-	Y	-	*	Y
Avenger	Y	-	-	-	-	*	Y
Mage	-	Y	-	Y	-	*	Y
Specialist	-	?	?	?	-	-	Y
Elementalist	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y
Arcanist	-	-	-	-	-	*	Y
Cleric	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	*	Y
Anchorite	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y
Thief	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	*	Y

Gypsy	-	-	-	Y	-	Y	Y
Psionicist	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Y Character is free to join this class.
* Character can possibly jote this class, depending upon his ancestry.
? Character can have access for the various branches of this class; consult the entry on specialist wizards.

Warriors

In every land, during every time, disputes occur that reason seems unable to solve. When matters come to blows, the warrior's job is to secure victory for his faction.

Exceptional Strength

As mentioned in the ability score section, warrior characters (except those of halfling or half-Vistani blood) are entitled to the advantages of exceptional Strength. When such a character has a Strength score of 18, percentile dice are rolled, and the result is appended parenthetically to that ability score. Thus, a character with an 18 Strength who rolls a 27 would record his Strength score as 18 (27).

Exceptional Constitution

Warriors are far more hearty than members of other groups. Their ability to take advantage of the higher hit point adjustments available for Constitution reflects this. For most characters, the greatest hit point bonus that can be obtained as a result of a high Constitution score is +2. Warriors, however, can exceed these normal limits. Those with a score of 17 receive a bonus of +3, while a Constitution of 18 earns the character a +4 adjustment to every Hit Die rolled. For characters with higher scores, even greater increases are possible, as indicated on **Table 42** in Appendix One: Ability Scores.

Hit Dice

Warriors use ten-sided dice to determine their hit points. They start with 10 hit points and add any Constitution adjustments that they receive. With the attainment of each new level (up to the 9th) a ten-sided die is rolled, and the result (as adjusted for the Constitution score) is added to his hit point total. When advancing to the 10th and subsequent levels, the character receives a flat +3 increase in his hit points. At this point, the character no longer receives bonuses for high Constitution scores.

Attack Rolls

A warrior's attack roll reflects his skill at arms. Although each of the character groups begins with a THAC0 of 20, a warrior's THAC0 improves by one point for each experience level. So, when a warrior gains a second experience level, his THAC0 becomes 19. Once he reaches the third level, his THAC0 becomes 18, and so on.

Multiply Attacks

As warriors progress in experience levels, they can attack more frequently in combat situations. This reflects their ability to act quickly to take advantage of weaknesses in an opponent's defenses. **Table 73: Warrior Attacks Per Round** indicates the number of times that a warrior of a given level can attack.

Table 73: Warrior Attacks Per Round

Experience Level	Number of Attacks
1st through 6th	1 per round

7th through 12th 3 every 2 rounds
13th through 20th 2 per round

Warriors of 7th through 12th level attack once on the first round of a battle and twice on the second. This process is repeated on subsequent rounds, so that on even-numbered rounds they are entitled to two attacks.

If using missile weapons or other attack forms that have a rate of fire greater than one per round, each attack entitles the warrior to a full volley of projectiles. Thus, a warrior who can attack twice per round effectively doubles the rate of fire with a bow or similar weapon.

Saving Throws

All members of the warrior group make use of the **Table 74** when determining their saving throws for various types of attack. As a rule, these characters are more resistant to physical attacks than other classes but are less able to repel magical energies directed at them.

Table 74: Warrior Saving Throws

Character Level	Paralyzation, Poison, or Death Magic	Rod, Staff, or Wand	Petrification or Polymorph*	Breath Weapon**	Spell***
0	16	18	17	20	19
1-2	14	16	15	17	17
3-4	13	15	14	16	16
5-6	11	13	12	13	14
7-8	10	12	11	12	13
9-10	8	10	9	9	11
11-12	7	9	8	8	10
13-14	5	7	6	5	8
15-16	4	6	5	4	7
17+	3	5	4	4	6

* Excluding polymorph wand attacks.
** Excluding those that cause petrificafion or polymorph.
*** Excluding thosefor which another saving throw type is specified, such as death magic, petrification, polymorph, etc.

Fear, Horror and Madness

Warriors are noted for their bravery and resolute courage in the face of even the greatest danger. As such, they have the best chance of succeeding when called upon to make fear checks. Their resistance to horror is average, reflecting their exposure to the awful terrors of war. Their ability to resist madness is less than that of other groups, however, for their mindset is firmly grounded in the real world, and the macabre often leaves them disoriented.

Table 75: Warrior Fear, Horror and Madness Checks

Character Level	Fear Check	Horror Check	Madness Check
0	13	19	19
1-2	12	18	18
3-4	11	17	17
5-6	10	16	16

7-8	9	15	15
9-10	7	14	14
11-12	6	13	13
13-14	4	12	12
15-16	2	10	11
17-18	2	8	10
19-20	2	6	8

Level Advancement

As they adventure, warrior characters acquire experience points to reflect their increased skill and prowess. All warriors use **Table 76: Warrior Experience Levels** to determine their level based upon the number of experience points acquired.

Table 76: Warrior Experience Levels

Character Level	Fighter	Ranger/ Avenger	Hit Dice
1	0	0	1d10*
2	2000	2250	2d10
3	4000	4500	3d10
4	8000	9000	4d10
5	16000	18000	5d10
6	32000	36000	6d10
7	64000	75000	7d10
8	125000	150000	8d10
9	250000	300000	9d10
10	500000	600000	9d10+3
11	750000	900000	9d10+6
12	1000000	1200000	9d10+9
13	1250000	1500000	9d10+12
14	1500000	1800000	9d10+15
15	1750000	2100000	9d10+18
16	2000000	2400000	9d10+21
17	2250000	2700000	9d10+24
18	2500000	3000000	9d10+27
19	2750000	3300000	9d10+30
20	3000000	3600000	9d10+33

* Player Characters begin with 10 hit points plus Constitution adjustments

Starting Wealth

All warrior characters begin play with 5d4x10 gold pieces. They can use this wealth to purchase weapons, armor, and other equipment prior to the start of play. In most cases, any unspent money remains with the character for use during his adventures.

Fighters

Ability Requirement: Strength 9+
Prime Requisite: Strength
Races Allowed: All



A warrior who does not fall into another class is considered a fighter, which is the general class in this group.

Ability Requirements

To become a fighter, a character must have a Strength score of 9 or better. Unusually strong fighters (those with a Strength score of 16 or better) gain a +10% bonus to any experience points that they earn. In addition to this bonus, a high Strength score improves the character's melee attack and damage rolls, making him more dangerous in close combat.

Fighters benefit greatly from, but are not required to have, high Dexterity and Constitution scores. The former, of course, improves the character's attack rolls with missile weapons and reduces his Armor Class, making him harder to hit in combat. The latter provides a bonus to the fighter's hit points, which can be invaluable in a pitched battle.

Alignment

Ravenloft fighter player characters can be of any nonevil alignment. Those of a lawful alignment tend to be part of a military force, mercenary company, or other organized group. Chaotic fighters might be wild barbarians or berserkers who seek battle for the sheer thrill of it. Lastly, those of a neutral alignment are often loners who have found the ways of battle forced upon them over the years. As often as not, such characters do not seek out combat, it seeks them.

Arms and Armor

Since fighters are weapons experts, they have access to any weapon and any armor available. They also have the ability to specialize in a weapon of their choosing.

Weapon Specialization

Fighters are the only characters able to specialize in the use of a given weapon, although the avenger has a limited version of this ability. A fighter who specializes in the use of a specific weapon must have trained extensively in its use. In addition to being proficient with that weapon, the character receives a bonus to his attack and damage rolls. Complete details on weapon specialization are presented in Appendix Five: Character Proficiencies.

Spells and Magical Items

Fighters cannot cast spells. Their training in the weapons of the world leaves them little or no time for the heavily academic pursuit of sorcery. Certain magical items are usable by fighters, however. Indeed, most magical weapons, armors, and shields are intended especially for the use of warriors. Beyond that, many magical rings, potions, and protection scrolls can also be used by these folk.

Bravery

As fighters adventure, they become hardened to the dangers of the world. Natives of the Demiplane of Dread even come to expect some of the grim things that life throws them. This doesn't mean that they ignore fear, only that they function better than most while their nerves are challenged. In game terms, bravery is reflected in an adjustment to the character's fear and horror checks. **Table 77: Bravery and Inspiration Bonuses** indicates the bonus that a fighter character receives when making such a roll.

Table 77: Bravery and Inspiration Bonuses*

Character Level	Fear Check	Horror Check	Inspire Others
1-5	+1	-	+1
6-10	+2	-	+2
11-15	+3	+1	+4
16-20	+4	+2	+6

* Bonuses are in addition to other racial or situational adjustments.

Inspiring Others

Because of their own self-confidence and experience in battle, a fighter can inspire bravery in those around him. The "Inspire Others" column on **Table 77** lists the bonus that those around the fighter gain on their fear checks. This bonus can be added to a single character or divided among many people. It reflects the fighter's ability to inspire confidence through his bravado, mannerisms, and conversation. If more than one fighter works with a given party of adventurers, they provide cumulative bonuses. However, no individual can receive a bonus of +4 or higher, no matter how many warriors devote their attentions to him.

A fighter must announce his intention to inspire a companion at least one turn (ten minutes) prior to the need for the fear check. It is not possible for the character to announce his intentions the moment that the Dungeon Master calls for a check.

Followers and Holdings

In other campaigns, fighter characters attract large numbers of followers as they attain higher levels. In essence, such characters forge their own armies and, before long, set out to conquer new lands and set themselves up as kings or even emperors. Such aspirations, while practical and perhaps even laudable in other settings, have no place in the gloom of Ravenloft. Thus, fighters native to the Demiplane of Dread do not have this ability.

Just as Ravenloft's fighters are not prone to assembling large armies about themselves, so too do they shy away from the construction of a keep or stronghold. Power in Ravenloft does not rest in the strength of one's military forces or holdings, and an experienced fighter recognizes this fact.

Rangers

Ability Requirement:	Strength 13+ Dexterity 13+ Constitution 14+ Wisdom 14+
Prime Requisite:	Strength, Dexterity, Wisdom
Races Allowed:	Elf, Half-Elf, Half-Vistani, Human



The ranger is a type of rugged warrior in tune with the wilderness and the beasts who dwell there. He might be a huntsman or a savage, a wandering explorer or a frontier woodsman.

Ability Requirements

In order to qualify as a ranger, a character must have Strength and Dexterity scores of at least 13, plus Constitution and Wisdom scores of not less than 14. A ranger with scores of at least 16 in his Strength, Dexterity, and Wisdom abilities gains a +10% bonus to any experience points that he is awarded during the course of play.

Alignment

All ranger characters must be of good alignment, although they are free to be lawful, neutral, or chaotic. The majority of rangers in Ravenloft are neutral good, although the other acceptable alignments are not uncommon.

Rangers must always work to retain their alignment. Any such character who willingly commits an evil act loses his status as a ranger and all the benefits that come with it. Although it may be difficult to define exactly what constitutes an "evil act," a good rule of thumb is that if the character is called upon to make a powers check (as described in Chapter Seven), he has committed an "evil act."

If a ranger commits an evil act involuntarily (as a result of some form of mental domination, for instance), the loss of status is only temporary. He can regain his powers and abilities by atoning for the act. Guidelines for such endeavors are found in Chapter Seven, under the discussion of Ravenloft powers checks.

If the evil deed was done purposefully and with malice, the loss is permanent. The character is, from that point on, simply a normal fighter. His level remains unchanged, and if he has more experience points than a fighter of that level would, the excess experience points are lost.

Arms and Armor

Rangers, like other types of warrior, make use of a great assortment of arms and armors. Several of their special abilities, however, function only when the rangers are clad in studded leather or lighter armor.

Two-Handed Attacks

Rangers, like all rogues and warriors, can attack with a weapon each hand. Of course, both weapons must be wielded one-handed and it is not possible to use a shield while fighting in this manner. One weapon must be specified as the primary one and the other must be lighter and smaller. The only exception to this rule is that a dagger can be used as both a primary and secondary weapon.

The special ability of rangers is that, when clad only in studded leather or lighter armor, they are not subject to the normal attack roll penalties associated with this tactic. If the ranger wears heavier armor, he suffers the normal -2 penalty to his attack roll with the primary weapon and a -4 adjustment to the roll made with the secondary weapon. The character's reaction adjustment still modifies these penalties, making them less severe for those with an exceptional Dexterity score.

The use of a second weapon entitles the character to one extra attack per round. As the ranger advances in level and earns the right to make more than one attack, the second weapon will still only allow him a single attack in each round. For example, a ranger who normally attacks once in one round and then twice in the second round (3/2) instead attacks twice in the first round and three times in the second round (5/2) when using a second weapon.

Archery

As woodsmen, the rangers of Ravenloft have come to depend upon their bows. These weapons win them the game that they cook over their fires and enable them to battle enemies from a distance and while concealed.

The exceptional skill of a ranger with his bow allows him to apply his missile attack adjustment (as determined by his Dexterity score) to both his attack and damage rolls. As a result, rangers with exceptional Strength and Dexterity gain a damage bonus with missile attacks. A Dexterity bonus applies only to long bows and short bows (not crossbows or other weapons).

Spells and Magical Items

Rangers have a limited ability to use spells, which sets them apart from the other members of the warrior group. The ability of these characters to use spells is similar to that of priest characters. At higher levels, rangers gain minor access to the animal and plant spheres.

Rangers do not gain bonus spells for high Wisdom scores and cannot use magical items intended for priest characters. **Table 78: Ranger Spell Abilities** indicates the spell abilities of a ranger character.

Table 78: Ranger Spell Abilities

Ranger Level	Casting Level	Priest Spell Level		
		1	2	3
8	1	1	-	-
9	2	2	-	-
10	3	2	1	-
11	4	2	2	-
12	5	2	2	1
13	6	3	2	1

14	7	3	2	2
15	8	3	3	2
16+	9	3	3	3

Although rangers can cast certain priest spells, they cannot use priest scrolls or magical items unless the item's description specifically states that they can. As with the fighter class, though, rangers can use magical shields, armor, and weapons as well as many rings, potions, and protection scrolls.

Tracking

Rangers are familiar with the ways of the beasts and skillful in tracking and hunting them. To reflect this, all rangers begin play with the tracking proficiency and need not allocate any slots to purchase it. Slots can be used to increase the character's chances of success when using this skill, however. In addition, the ranger's ability with this skill increases as he advances in level. Table 79: Ranger Special Abilities details this adjustment.

Stealth

The grace and skill of a ranger gives him the ability to move silently and hide in shadows just as if he were a rogue. It must be noted, however, that he can use these abilities only when in studded leather or lighter armor.

The chance of success that a character has with these skills is based upon his level and is indicated on **Table 79**. Further, these values are based upon the assumption that the character is attempting to use the skill while in a wilderness environment. Elsewhere, for example in a crypt or dark alley, the chance of success is halved. The chances indicated in **Table 79** are adjusted by the character's race, Dexterity score, and the type of armor worn by the character (if any). These modifiers are listed in **Table 80: Adjustments to Ranger Special Abilities.**

Table 79: Ranger Special Abilities

Ranger Level	Tracking Slots	Hide in Shadows	Move Silently
1	1	10%	15%
2	1	15%	21%
3	2	20%	27%
4	2	25%	33%
5	2	31%	40%
6	3	37%	47%
7	3	43%	55%
8	3	49%	62%
9	4	56%	70%
10	4	63%	78%
11	4	70%	86%
12	5	77%	94%
13	5	85%	99%
14	5	93%	99%
15	6	99%	99%
16	6	99%	99%
17	6	99%	99%
18	7	99%	99%
19	7	99%	99%
20	7	99%	99%

Table 80: Adjustments to Ranger Special Abilities

Character Race	Hide in Shadows	Move Silently
Elf	+10%	+5%
Half-Elf	+5%	-
Half-Vistani	-	-
Human	-	-
Dexterity Score		
17	+5%	+5%
18	+10%	+10%
19	+15%	+15%
Armor Worn		
None	+5%	+10%
Elven Chain	-10%	-10%
Padded or Studded Leather	-20%	-20%

Special Enemies

The domains of Ravenloft are not subject to attacks by marauding bands of ores or the random frenzies of goblins and giants. Because of this, the rangers of the Demiplane do not have the ability to name a special enemy as their peers in other realms do.

Animal Emphaty

Rangers are familiar with the behavior of animals and can read their moods and handle them more skillfully than others. This ability enables them to calm wild beasts or those animals conditioned to attack strangers. This ability can only be used on natural creatures, not those of a fantastic nature.

When a ranger wishes to affect the reaction roll made for an animal, he does so by speaking calmly to it and by making soothing sounds. For its part, the animal must make a saving throw vs. rod, staff, or wand with a penalty of -1 per three experience levels of the ranger. Thus, an animal attempting to resist the overtures of 6th-level ranger would suffer a -2 on its saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, the ranger can alter the result of its reaction roll by one place.

Cure Lycanthropy

At 10th level, rangers become familiar enough with the plants and herbs of the Demiplane that they can concoct a brew that might cure lycanthropy. No more than one dose of this potion can be created per month since it requires a full thirty days to gather and process the needed materials. During these thirty days, the ranger can take breaks to attend to other matters such as eating and sleeping, but these breaks cannot be longer than a day. If a ranger does lose a day for some reason, not only must a day be added to the potion creation process, but materials previously gathered lose their potency. Once the ingredients of the potion start to lose their potency, there exists a higher possibility that the potion will fail in a deadly fashion.

The draught created by the ranger must be imbibed to be effective and only works on infected lycanthropes. True and cursed lycanthropes are immune to so simple a remedy. The potion takes effect almost as soon as it is swallowed, causing the creature extreme pain and disorientation. A system shock roll must be made by the lycanthrope, with success indicating that the cure has been effective. For every day that the completion of the potion was delayed during its creation, a 10% penalty is

imposed on the system shock roll. Failure of the roll results in the death of the imbiber. The potion created by a ranger is not magical and retains its potency for only one hour per level f the ranger.

Followers

Although Ravenloft rangers forego the ability to acquire henchmen and hirelings at 8th level, they do have the ability to attract followers once they attain 10th level.

Henchmen and Hirelings

Rangers are generally loners who prefer the environs of the wilderness to the confines of the city and enjoy the company of animals more than that of men. To that end, no such character can acquire any form of henchmen, hirelings, or mercenaries even when they attain 8th level.

Animal Followers

Rangers in other realms often assemble a cadre of followers who join them. They are still permitted to do so on the Demiplane, but their choice of companions is reduced. No sentient creatures are available to the ranger as followers; only animals will join him.

After the ranger attains 10th level, the Dungeon Master secretly rolls 2d6 to determine how many followers show up throughout the ranger's career. Once this has been ascertained, the ranger can acquire his first follower. Thereafter, a new one arrives (at the Dungeon Master's discretion) as each additional level is acquired. The type of animal that joins the ranger is determined by a die roll and depends upon the climate of the area. **Table 81: Ranger's Followers** can be used to determine the exact nature of a ranger's followers.

Table 81: Ranger's Followers

1d8 Roll	Cold Climate	Temperate Climate	Tropical Climate
1	Badger	Bear	Camel
2	Bear	Boar	Cheetah
3	Owl	Cougar	Hyena
4	Fox	Hawk	Elephant
5	Otter	Owl	Rhino/Hippo
6	Stag	Raccoon	Monkey/Ape
7	Wolf	Raven	Tiger
8	Wolverine	Wolf	Hawk

It should be noted that **Table 81** is intended to provide suggestions only. The Dungeon Master can ignore the result and send whatever type of animal he chooses to join the ranger. Similarly, a related animal could be used. For example, a "hawk" result might indicate a falcon, eagle, or other bird of prey, as appropriate to the situation and climate.

Should one of the ranger's animal followers be slain, it is not automatically replaced and still counts toward the ranger's total allowable followers.

Holdings

Like other warriors, rangers who originate from or make their homes in Ravenloft do not tend to make fortifications or

strongholds. The nature of these folk is too nomadic and rustic to make this option palatable to them.

Wealth and Possessions

Rangers are not impressed with or desirous of material wealth. As such, they own no more than they can carry on their person (or in the saddlebags of their mount). Any excess wealth must be donated to a worthy charity or put to other good use. Such institutions must not be associated with another player character.

Avengers

Ability Requirement:	Strength 15+ Dexterity 14+ Constitution 15+
Prime Requisite:	Strength, Constitution
Races Allowed:	Dwarf, Half-Vistani, Human



Avengers are fighters who are driven by an almost obsessive need for revenge. At some point in their past, they witnessed a great wrong or tragedy and have dedicated themselves to seeing that those responsible, or others like them, are punished for their crimes or actions.

Ability Requirements

An avenger has spent years perfecting his physical condition and training for his war against his chosen enemy. To reflect this, his physical ability scores must be well above average. An avenger must have a Strength score of at least 15, a Dexterity score of no less than 14, and a Constitution score of 15 or better. The prime requisites for avenger characters are Strength and Constitution. If an avenger has a score of 16 or higher in both of these scores, he earns a bonus of +10% to any experience points awarded to him during the course of play.

Alignment

All avenger characters must be either neutral or chaotic. Apart from this, the alignment of avenger player characters is spread evenly between good and neutral. Only nonplayer characters can be of an evil alignment.

In general, the alignment of the avenger is the opposite of his enemy. If the character seeks revenge upon an evil person, then his alignment is good. However, a. Dungeon Master could choose to have both an avenger oonplayer character and the target of his hatred to be evil.

Arms and Armor

As with the fighter, an avenger can use any type of weapon or armor available to him. Because of his intense training, he can also choose to specialize in a weapon.

Weapon Specialization

Avengers devote much of their time to training and exercise. Because of this, they have the ability to specialize in a melee weapon of their choice. Since their need for face-to-face vengeance is so great, avengers cannot choose to specialize in any

type of ranged weapon. For further details on weapon specialization, see Appendix Five.

Spells and Magical Items

Avengers, like most other warriors, cannot cast spells. They focus on their own obsession too much to devote their minds to the involved study required for spellcasting. Only the martial exercises hold any fascination for them.

Avengers use the same magical items as normal fighters. Thus, they can use all manner of magical arms, armors, and shields. In addition, they can use most magical rings, potions, and scrolls of protection.

Extra Hit Points

An avenger's focused need for revenge is such that whenever he confronts an enemy that reminds him of his nemesis in melee combat, he gains 5 hit points to help him through the encounter. This bonus increases to 10 hit points when he faces the subject of his vengeance. These hit points work exactly like the aid spell in that they are the first hit points the avenger loses when he takes damage. Once the combat is over, the extra hit points (if any) go away.

Intuition

If an avenger makes a successful Wisdom check while pursuing his foe, he intuitively "knows" which direction he should head. This ability helps an avenger by providing him with a general direction to go; it does not guide him directly to a specific location.

Followers and Holdings

Avengers do not attract followers as some types of warrior do. Like rangers, they are often nomadic in nature, moving from place to place as they stalk their enemy.

While avengers do not pause in their endeavors long enough to establish fortifications, they sometimes take up residence somewhere if their prey is stationary. The nature of these accommodations is not a keep or a stronghold, however. More often than not, an avenger's lair resembles the safehouse or hideout established by many types of rogue characters.

Wizards

Wizards and magic are central to the structure of the AD&D game rules. They hold no less importance in the misty realm of Ravenloft than on the ancient worlds of Krynn, Faerun, or Oerth.

Arms and Armor

Of all the classes, wizards are the least suited to physical combat. Their intense devotion to the academic study of magic leaves them little time to pursue martial interests.

For this reason, wizards cannot wear armor or employ shields of any type. Certain magical items, like a cloak of protection, can be used to improve a wizard's Armor Class, but wizards generally remain far more vulnerable to attacks than other adventurers.

Wizards are also very limited in the types of weapons that they can employ. As a rule, they can use only daggers, knives, and staves in melee combat or darts and slings in missile combat. Of course, daggers and knives can serve dual roles, for they can be thrown at enemies as well.

Hit Dice

Just as they possess less skill with weapons and armor, so too are wizards less resistant to physical harm than most other types of characters. To reflect this, all wizard characters use four-sided Hit Dice. They are not entitled to an exceptional hit point bonus and are limited to a +2 adjustment no matter how high their Constitution scores.

Wizard characters start with 4 hit points and add their Constitution adjustment. After the 1st level, they roll for hit points until such time as they reach the 10th level. From the 11th level on, they receive only a single additional hit point with each level advance. In addition, they no longer receive bonuses for high Constitution scores at that point.

Attack Rolls

The lack of skill that wizard characters have in physical combat is most apparent in their attack rolls. Like all 1st-level characters, wizards begin with a THAC0 of 20. However, this number improves only with every three levels of experience that the character attains. Thus, a 4th-level wizard has a THAC0 of 19, a 7th-level wizard has 18, and so on.

Saving Throws

Wizards gather about them the magical energies of the world. This makes them more resistant to certain forms of attack, especially those of a magical nature, than other character types.

Table 82: Wizard Saving Throws

Character Level	Paralyzation, Poison, or Death Magic	Rod, Staff, or Wand	Petrification or Polymorph*	Breath Weapon**	Spell***
1-5	14	11	13	15	12

6-10	13	9	11	13	10
11-15	11	7	9	11	8
16-20	10	5	7	9	6
21+	8	3	5	7	4

* Excluding polymorph wand attacks.
** Excluding those that cause petrificafion or polymorph.
*** Excluding thosefor which another saving throw type is specified, such as death magic, petrification, polymorph, etc.

Fear, Horror and Madness

While wizards are not cowards, they are not confronted by the rigors of battle on a regular basis. By the same token, the mysterious and macabre nature of the world is almost second nature to them. Because of this, wizards possess more resistance to the horrors of Ravenloft than other characters but find themselves somewhat more susceptible to fear.

Table 83: Wizard Fear, Horror and Madness Checks

Character Level	Fear Check	Horror Check	Madness Check
0	17	15	19
1-2	16	14	18
3-4	15	13	17
5-6	14	12	16
7-8	13	11	15
9-10	12	10	14
11-12	10	9	13
13-14	8	8	12
15-16	6	6	11
17-18	4	4	10
19-20	2	2	8

Level Advancement

As they adventure, wizards acquire experience points to reflect their increased knowledge and magical power. The rate at which wizards advance in level is indicated on **Table 84: Wizard Experience Levels**. Unless otherwise indicated, this table applies to all wizard classes.

Table 84: Wizard Experience Levels

Character Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice
1	0	1d4*
2	2500	2d4
3	5000	3d4
4	10000	4d4
5	20000	5d4
6	40000	6d4
7	60000	7d4
8	90000	8d4
9	135000	9d4

10	250000	10d4
11	375000	10d4+1
12	750000	10d4+2
13	1250000	10d4+3
14	1500000	10d4+4
15	1875000	10d4+5
16	2250000	10d4+6
17	2625000	10d4+7
18	3000000	10d4+8
19	3375000	10d4+9
20	3750000	10d4+10

* Player Characters begin with 4 hit points plus Constitution adjustments

Spells and Magical Items

Of course, all wizard characters can cast spells. While changes to the exact effects of various spells and other aspects of magic use in Ravenloft are detailed elsewhere in this book (see Chapter Nine), **Table 85: Wizard Spell Progression** can be used to determine the number and level of spells available to a given character.

Wizards have a great affinity for magic in all its forms. As such, they can use of more types of magical items than any other character class. Nearly every magical potion, ring, wand, rod, scroll, or miscellaneous magical item that a wizard finds is open to use by him. However, wizards cannot use any magical armor or wield magical weapons normally restricted to wizards.

Beyond the use of such treasures, a wizard can actually create magical items of his own. Upon attaining 9th level, he can begin to pen magical scrolls and brew magical potions. Magical items can be created by using the instructions in the Player's Handbook and the Dungeon Master Guide.

Table 85: Wizard Spell Progression

Wizard	Spell Level								
Level	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	4	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
8	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
9	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
10	4	4	3	2	3	-	-	-	-
11	4	4	4	3	3	-	-	-	-
12	4	4	4	4	4	1	-	-	-
13	5	5	5	4	4	2	-	-	-
14	5	5	5	4	4	2	1	-	-
15	5	5	5	5	5	2	1	-	-
16	5	5	5	5	5	3	2	1	-
17	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	2	-

18	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	2	1
19	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	1
20	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	3	2

Followers and Holdings

While wizards can own property and receive a monthly income, they don't gain any special benefits for having a fortress or stronghold, especially in Ravenloft. Wizards also don't attract any followers, although they can acquire a few henchmen and apprentices to help them.

Starting Wealth

All wizard characters begin play with (1d4+1)xl0 gold pieces. They are free to use this wealth to purchase whatever weapons and other equipment they desire prior to the start of play. In most cases, any unspent cash remains with the character for use during his adventures.

Mages

Ability Requirement: Intelligence 9+
Prime Requisite: Intelligence
Races Allowed: Elf, Half-Elf, Half-Vistani, Human



Mages are the standard class of wizard found in Ravenloft. They favor no particular school of magic and suffer no penalties to their spellcasting abilities. Balancing this, however, is the fact that mages have fewer spells than those who opt to specialize in a school.

Ability Requirements

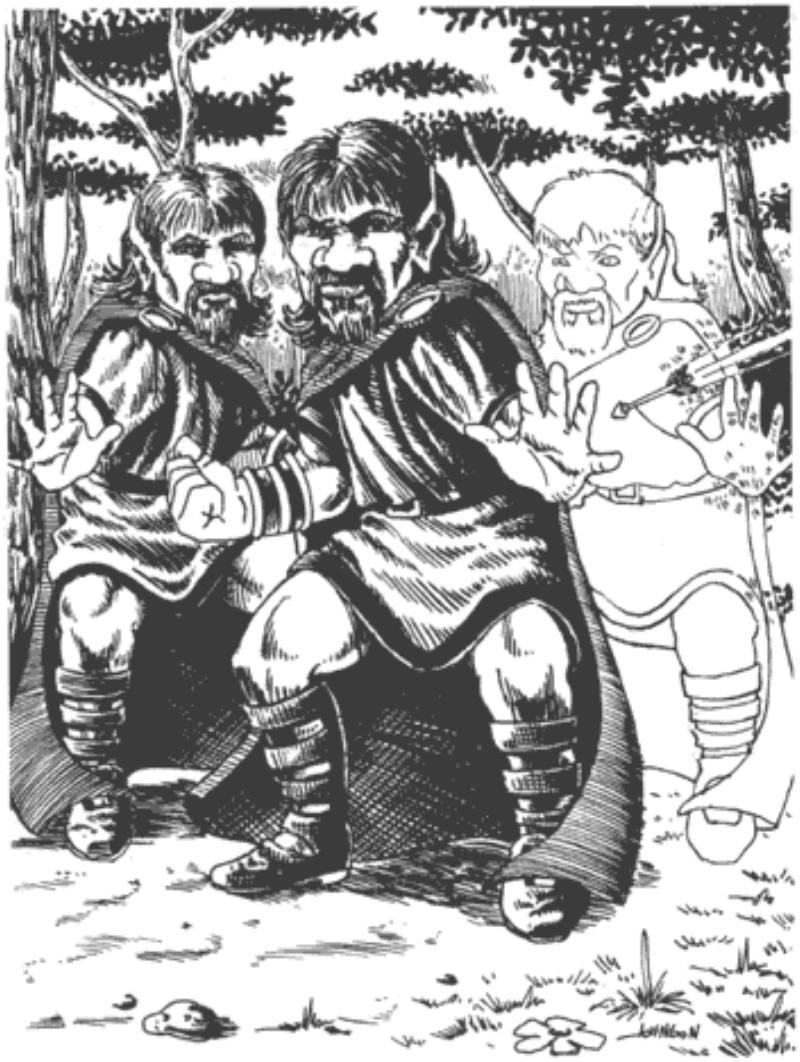
Wizards of any type must have keen minds and quick wits. As such, Intelligence is the prime requisite for those who would pursue this profession. No character can be a mage unless he has an Intelligence score of 9 or better. Mages who have an Intelligence score of 16 or better receive a +10% bonus to any experience points that they earn during play.

Alignment

Mage player characters can be of any alignment except evil, although the public perception of them in Ravenloft is that they are universally evil. People fear and vilify what they do not understand, and few of the common folk have even the faintest idea as to how magic works.

Lawful mages are often associated with an organization of some sort, such as the court of a wealthy noble or a school of wizardry. At the other end of the spectrum, chaotic wizards generally wander the Demiplane of Dread in search of power. They respect no authority and accept no interference. Neutral mages often become hermits who have cloistered themselves so that they might study the art of magic undisturbed.

Specialist Wizards



A select group of wizards decide to focus their studies on a specific type of magic. The end result of this is that they become highly skilled in their chosen branch, although they obtain such talent at the cost of knowledge in other areas. All specialist wizards possess similar abilities and limitations.

Ability Requirements

All schools require the minimum Intelligence listed under the mage class as well as an additional minimum ability score. **Table 86: Wizard Specialist Requirements** (lists each of the restrictions. If a specialist wizard has an Intelligence score of 16 or better, then he receives a 10% bonus to any experience point award granted him.

Racial Limitations

Several specialized schools are open not only to humans, but also some of the other races. To find out which races can become certain types of specialists, refer to **Table 86**.

Alignment

As with the mage, specialist wizard player characters can be of any alignment except evil. The perceptions and actions listed under the "Alignment" section of the mage class also holds true with regards to specialists.

Spells

Since specialists focus on a certain school, specialist characters must first choose the school that they wish to work in. The skill that a specialist gains in his chosen school provides him with some advantages and disadvantages over the mage class regarding extra spells, learning and acquiring spells, and spell creation.

The Thirteen Schools

Magic on the Demiplane of Dread is divided into thirteen distinct areas of study, known as schools. Four of these schools are the purview of the elementalist. If a player character wishes to specialize in any one of those four schools (air, earth, fire, or water), he should refer to the elementalist class. The school of lesser divination is open to all wizards and cannot be the subject of specialization.

Wizards who focus on one of the other eight schools are considered specialists. By opting to become a specialist wizard, a character gains increased abilities in certain areas but also limits himself in others. Each specialist has at least one opposition

school, from which he cannot cast spells. For further information on schools that oppose each other, see **Table 86**.

Abjurers: Abjurers specialize in the school of abjuration. Through the use of their magical powers, they create barriers, wards, and other magical types of protection.

Conjurers: Wizards of this type channel their powers into learning spells that enable them to summon creatures to them and create materials from thin air. At higher levels, they gain the ability to pull creatures from other planes to them. This is especially dangerous in Ravenloft, for such creatures are seldom pleased to discover that they are now prisoners of the Demiplane.

Diviners: Diviners are experts at acquiring information and learning obscure or forgotten things. No secret is safe from the prying eyes of a diviner. Even the veil of time cannot hide things from such people. Although male half-Vistani characters cannot be diviners, female characters of half-Vistani blood are always free to be diviners, no matter what their Wisdom score.

Enchanters: The enchanter specializes in spells that imbue objects with magical power and direct the actions of living beings. They do this by exerting their will at the most basic of levels and extending the limits of their essence.

Illusionists: Illusionist spells tend to fall into two categories. The first are illusions, which bend light to create images of things that are not there. The second are phantasms, which exist only in the mind of the target.

Invokers: An invoker is an expert in the school of invocation/evocation. Such characters can call upon the forces of the universe and shape them into physical and magical constructs.

Necromancers: It is often assumed that necromancers are the most common type of specialist mage found in Ravenloft. In actuality, the reverse is true. Because of the nature of their spells, which involve death and the undead, those who specialize in this type of magic are often drawn into the darkness themselves and consumed by the Mists.

Transmuters: Transmuters are experts in the school of alteration. They have the power to reshape the very structure of time and space. The great variety of spells available to transmuters can make them the most powerful of Ravenloft's specialist wizards.

Table 86: Wizard Specialist Requirements

Specialist	School	Race	Minimum Ability	Opposition Schools
Abjurer	Abjuration	H	15 Wis	Alt. & Illusion
Conjurer	Conjuration/ Summoning	H, 1/2E, 1/2V	15 Con	Gr. Div & Inv.
Diviner	Greater Divination	H, 1/2E, E, 1/2V*	16 Wis	Conj./Summ.
Enchanter	Enchantment/ Charm	H, 1/2E, E, 1/2V	16 Cha	Inv./Evo. & Necro.
Illusionist	Illusion	H, G, 1/2V	16 Dex	Necro., Inv./Evo., Abj.
Invoker	Invocation/ Evocation	H	16 Con	Ench./Charm & Conj./Summ.
Necromancer	Necromancy	H	16 Wis	Illusion & Ench./Charm
Transmuter	Alteration	H, 1/2E	15 Dex	Abj. & Necro.

* See the section about diviners for a special limitation on half-Vistani.

Extra Spells

Specialist wizards have the ability to memorize and cast an extra spell of each spell level open to him. Thus, a wizard with access to 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-level spells would have three bonus spells available to him (one Ist-level, one 2nd-level, and one 3rd-level spell). These bonus spells must be from the wizard's specialty school and are memorized in the same manner as other spells.

Learning Spells

When a specialist attempts to learn a spell from his chosen school, his chance to succeed (as determined by his Intelligence) is increased by +15%. Conversely, when such a characters seeks to add a spell from another school to his spell book, he suffers a -15% penalty.

Spell Acquisition

Whenever a specialist character gains the ability to cast spells of a new level, he automatically adds one spell of the newly available level from his chosen school to his spell book. This reflects the dedication with which a specialist studies the lore and literature of his particular field. The spell can be chosen by the player, selected by the Dungeon Master, or determined by a die roll, as the Dungeon Master desires. No roll is required to learn this spell.

Creating New Spells

When a specialist wizard attempts to create a new spell within his chosen school, that spell is treated as if it were one level lower than it actually is. Thus, if the character attempts to create a 3rd-level spell, it is treated as a 2nd-level spell for the purposes of his research.

Magical Items

Specialists freely use most of the magical items available to other wizards. They cannot, however, employ those items that duplicate the effects of spells from their opposition fields.

Saving Throw Adjustments

A specialist's knowledge of magic serves him well when he is called upon to defend himself from spells drawn from his own area of expertise. Whenever a specialist must attempt a saving throw brought on by a spell from his chosen school, he does so with a +1 bonus. Likewise, his own spells are so powerful that other characters make their saving throws against his spells with a -1 penalty. When a specialist casts a spell on a specialist of the same type, the modifiers cancel each other out.

Power Checks

The skill that a specialist possesses with spells from his own school enables him to cheat the dark powers, at least for a time. When a specialist wizard casts a spell that requires him to make a powers check, he reduces the chance of failing that check by half (round down). Thus, if he casts a spell that normally requires a powers check with a 14% chance of failure, his actual chance of failure is only 7%.

Conversely, however, their lack of skill with spells from other schools makes it more likely that they will draw the attention of the masters of Ravenloft when doing evil. The chances of failure on a powers check made by a specialist using a spell outside his chosen school is increased by half (round up). Thus, a spell that involves a 14% powers check for a normal mage

would carry a 21% chance of failure for the specialist.

Elementalists

Ability Requirement: Intelligence 9+
Prime Requisite: Intelligence
Races Allowed: Human



The elementalist is a rare breed of specialist wizard who bends the natural forces of the universe to his will. The Vistani recognized this type of magic when they created their mystical tarokka deck, which has one suit for each of the four elements.

Ability Requirements

To become an elementalist, a character must have an Intelligence of at least 9. No other ability requirements are necessary for this class. If an elementalist has an Intelligence score of 16 or better, then he receives a 10% bonus to any experience points that he earns.

Alignment

As with the mage class, any alignment except evil is available to the elementalist player character. For further guidelines, see the section detailing the mage class.

Spells

Since elementalists are a different kind of specialist, not only do they gain some of the advantages and disadvantages normally associated with other types of specialist wizards, but they also have a few of their own special bonuses.

The Elemental Schools

Air, earth, fire, and water are the four elemental schools. Like the eight schools described in the section on specialist wizards, each elemental school has an opposition school that is closed to some specialists. No matter which of these schools a wizard of this type specializes in, he is known as an elementalist.

The following brief descriptions provide an overview of the four elemental schools and their practitioners.

Air: The magic of elemental air deals with all manner of vapors and mists. Those who practice it can turn the air around their enemies toxic or have the winds slow a falling ally so that he lands safely. Air elementalists are noted for their wanderlust and light-spirited personalities. Wizards who specialize in the spells of elemental air cannot cast spells from the school of earth.

Earth: The spells of elemental earth permit a wizard to create barriers that can keep his enemies at bay, cause the very

ground to swallow up attackers, and shatter great iron gates with a single blow. Many of the earth elementalist's spells are defensive in nature, an aspect reflected in their often stern, unyielding dispositions. The school of elemental earth opposes that of elemental air, making it impossible for students of the former to use spells from the latter.

Fire: Those who have mastered the elemental spells of fire are deadly enemies. They can call forth fireballs or meteor showers and create rolling masses of incendiary vapors. While their spells may lack the finesse of other elementalists, they serve the needs of these often quick-tempered wizards admirably. Because of the natural enmity between fire and water, those who specialize in the use of spells from this school must forsake those that deal with elemental water.

Water: Most water elementalists are determined and resolute. While they are not actually stubborn, they do often get their way in the end. Their spells affect not only water, but also ice and liquids of other varieties. In order to become a master of elemental water, one must forever abandon the ability to cast spells from the school of elemental fire.

Extra Spells

Elementalists have the ability to memorize and cast an extra spell (of each spell level open to him) each day. Thus, an elementalist with access to 1st- and 2nd-level spells would have two bonus spells available to him: one 1st-level and one 2nd-level spell. These bonus spells must be from the elemental school in which he has specialized and are memorized in the same manner as other spells.

Learning Spells

When an elementalist attempts to learn a spell that relates to his chosen school, his chance to succeed (as determined by his Intelligence) is increased by +25%. When he attempts to learn a spell that relates to another element, he has a bonus of +15%. When an elementalist attempts to learn a spell that has no ties to an elemental school (such as a *charm person* spell), he suffers a -25% penalty on his chance to do so.

Spell Boosting

Once per day, an elementalist may opt to cast any spell from his chosen school as if he had acquired an additional 1d4 levels of experience. The decision to do this must be made and announced at the moment the spell is cast. This level-boosting effect increases the range, duration, damage, and other aspects of the spell as indicated by its particular description. It does not permit the elementalist to cast a spell of a level that would not normally be available to him.

Creating New Spells

When an elementalist attempts to create a new spell within his chosen school, that spell is treated as if it were one level lower than it actually is. Thus, if the character attempts to create a 3rd-level spell, it is treated as a 2nd-level spell for the purposes of his research.

Magical Items

All elementalists can freely use most of the magical items available to other wizards. They cannot, however, employ those items that duplicate the effects of spells from their opposition fields.

Saving Throw Adjustments

An elementalist's skill with his special magic serves him well when he must defend himself from spells based on his chosen

element. Whenever an elementalist attempts a saving throw against a spell from his chosen school, he does so with a +2 bonus. Likewise, his own spells are so powerful that other characters make their saving throws against them with a -2 penalty. When an elementalist casts a spell on another elementalist of the same school, their bonuses cancel each other out.

Controlling Elements

Upon attaining the 15th level of experience, an elementalist can control elemental creatures from his chosen field without concentration. Thus, he may attempt other actions of his own while continuing to direct those of the elemental. For further information, consult the description of the *conjure elemental* spell. This does not apply to Ravenloft elementals, which remain almost impossible for a wizard of any type to control. Further, the chance that the elemental will turn on the summoner is unchanged.

Taming Elementals

Upon reaching 20th level, if the wizard summons an elemental that is drawn from the same substance that he specialized in, then the chance that the elemental will turn on him is ignored. Thus, a fire elemental has no chance to turn on a 20th-level fire elementalist. This does not apply to Ravenloft elementals.

Power Checks

The skill that an elementalist possesses with spells from his own school enables him to avoid the attention of the dark powers when casting spells for an evil intent. When an elementalist wizard casts a spell from his school that requires him to make a powers check, he reduces the chance of failing that check by half (round down). Thus, if the spell that requires a powers check with a 14% chance of failure, his actual chance of failure is only 7%.

Conversely, however, their lack of skill with spells from other schools makes it more likely that they will draw the attention of the masters of Ravenloft when doing evil. The chances of failure on a powers check made by an elementalist using a spell outside his elemental field is increased by half (round up). Thus, a spell that involves a 14% powers check for a normal mage would carry a 21% chance of failure for the elementalist.

Arcanists

Ability Requirement: Intelligence 15+
Wisdom 15+
Prime Requisite: Intelligence
Races Allowed: Half-Vistani, Human



Arcanists are a special breed of wizard specializing in all matters occult and forbidden. In many ways, they combine the features of a necromancer and summoner, for their powers mimic both classes. At the same time, however, they are considered bards of the macabre, for they know the secrets that man dreads to hear spoken. Arcanists are found only in Ravenloft, although those who have traveled outside of the Demiplane of Dread do not lose their powers when they leave the Mists behind.

Ability Requirements

In order to be an arcanist, a character must have a highly trained mind and be blessed with the insight to make the best use of his keen intellect. To reflect this, the character must have Intelligence and Wisdom scores of at least 15. If an arcanist has an Intelligence score of 16 or better, he receives a 10% bonus to any experience points that he earns.

Alignment

Arcanists must always be of lawful alignment, although they are as often neutral or evil as they are good. Those known as white arcanists are of good alignment and tend to turn their studies to the battling of evil and the thwarting of occult menaces. Gray, or neutral, arcanists seek to comprehend the nature of the Demiplane of Dread and understand the fragile balance between life and death that exists there. Black, or evil, arcanists desire knowledge and mastery over the occult so that they can acquire personal power and domination over the supernatural. Of course, arcanist player characters cannot take any evil alignment; only nonplayer characters can be evil.

Spells

Arcanists have the ability to cast spells at the same rate as other wizards (see **Table 85**). Their intense study of necromancy and other black arts limits the schools that they can learn spells from, however. No arcanist can ever master magic from the schools of alteration, invocation/ evocation, enchantment/charm, or illusion/phantasm.

Learing Spells

Arcanists gain a bonus of +25% when attempting to learn a spell from either the necromancy or greater divination schools. They receive a similar penalty when striving to master spells from other schools.

Magical Items

Arcanists use most of the same magical items that other wizards use. Most rings, wands, rods, and many miscellaneous magical items function normally for them. They cannot, however, make use of any item that mimics a spell from the schools of alteration, invocation/evocation, enchantment/charm, or illusion/phantasm.

Saving Throw Adjustments

The power of an arcanist is so great that his spells are not easily resisted. Whenever one of these characters employs a spell from the school of necromancy or greater divination, his target suffers a -2 penalty on his saving throw. When an arcanist must defend himself from similar spells, he receives a +2 bonus. If an arcanist casts such a spell upon another arcanist, the two saving throw adjustments cancel each other.

Turning/Commanding Undead

Characters of this type know far more about the ways of the dead and undead than wizards from other realms. Even the skills of the typical necromancer do not match those of Ravenloft's arcanists.

Because of this, characters of this type can command (if an evil, nonplayer character) or turn (if good) undead creatures just as if they were clerics. Information on turning undead is presented in the entry for priest characters. Players of lawful neutral arcanists must decide at the time of character creation whether their characters will turn or control undead. Once this decision is made, it cannot be reversed.

Forbidden Lore

In matters of the occult and supernatural, the knowledge of an arcanist is unmatched. Some have remarked wryly that bards know a little bit about everything, while arcanists know a little bit about everything spooky.

Whenever an arcanist is presented with a person, object, or location that has some significance in the supernatural and macabre history of Ravenloft, he has a 5% chance per experience level to know some relevant fact about it. This ability is similar to that of the bard but applies only to those things that have a special significance in Ravenloft. Exactly what items do and do not fall into this category is up to the Dungeon Master. An arcanist need not handle objects being considered, so he is safe from any curses they might carry.

Power Checks

By the very nature of their research, arcanists leave themselves open to the darkness of the land. They study things that no man should study and travel places best left unexplored.

Throughout his life, an arcanist must fight an unending battle to avoid being drawn into the web of evil and magic that he studies. As such, whenever one of these characters advances in level, he must attempt a powers check with a chance of failure equal to 5% per level. Thus, as the character reaches higher levels, it becomes impossible to avoid some degree of corruption.

Horror Checks

Arcanists are well versed in all things dark and sinister. Because of this, they often shake off things that might frighten or

horrify another adventurer. In game terms, a +2 bonus to all fear and horror checks reflects this.

Priests

Priests are holy men and mystics who travel the Demiplane of Dread to spread the values of their own religion. If good, they promote compassion, understanding, and healing. If evil - fear, ignorance, and disease. They have good combat abilities, enabling them to defend themselves and their followers from enemies of the faith.

Priests, clerics, and other men of faith have long been a subject of controversy among scholars of the Demiplane of Dread. None doubt that these folk are cut off in some way from the gods of other realms when they travel within the Mists, and yet they retain their miraculous powers.

One commonly voiced explanation for this phenomenon is that the dark powers, whoever and whatever they might be, cannot prevent a god from bestowing upon his followers the benefits of faith. Given the absolute control which the dark powers seem to have over all of Ravenloft, this seems unlikely. However, the thought that any force is so strong as to block out the will of a god seems equally implausible.

The second theory is that the dark powers themselves begin to respond to the prayers of a priest, granting him the spells that he requests in lieu of the deity that he serves. While this seems to run contrary to some of the commonly held beliefs concerning the mysterious masters of the Mists, it defies none of the known tenets of their existence. As such, this theory has become more and more accepted in recent years.

Whatever the case, the end result is the same. Priests retain their ability to cast spells even among the swirling vapors of the Demiplane of Dread.

Hit Dice

Members of the priest group use eight-sided Hit Dice, making them second only to warriors in their ability to survive wounds and withstand injuries. Priest characters begin play with 8 hit points (the maximum roll of 1d8) plus any adjustment for their Constitution score. When they advance to 2nd level, and with each subsequent level up to and including the 9th level, they roll an additional eight-sided die and increase their hit points by the amount indicated. Again, high or low Constitution scores can alter the roll. After attaining 9th level, they receive a standard bonus of +2 hit points per level. At this point, Constitution adjustments no longer apply.

Attack Rolls

Since priests are sometimes called upon to defend their faith by strength of arms, they have a certain amount in skill when wielding weapons. As a result, their THAC0 begins at 20 and improves by two for every three experience levels earned. For example, a 4th-level priest has a THAC0 of 18, a 7th-level priest has 16, and so on.

Saving Throws

All members of this group use the same table when determining their saving throws for various types of attacks. Priests are not especially resistant to any given type of attack, nor do they have any marked vulnerabilities. Priests have the most balanced saving throws of any character class.

Table 87: Priest Saving Throws

Character Level	Paralyzation, Poison, or Death Magic	Rod, Staff, or Wand	Petrification or Polymorph*	Breath Weapon**	Spell***
1-3	10	14	13	16	15
4-6	9	13	12	15	14
7-9	7	11	10	13	12
10-12	6	10	9	12	11
13-15	5	9	8	11	10
16-18	4	8	10	9	4
19+	2	6	5	8	7

* Excluding polymorph wand attacks.
** Excluding those that cause petrificafion or polymorph.
*** Excluding thosefor which another saving throw type is specified, such as death magic, petrification, polymorph, etc.

Fear, Horror and Madness

Priests are strong-willed folk who draw courage from their faith. The strength of their convictions is so great that it makes them nearly as resistant to fear as hardened veterans. When confronted with the horrors of the world, many of which border on blasphemy in their eyes, they are sometimes given pause, however.

Table 88: Priest Fear, Horror and Madness Checks

Character Level	Fear Check	Horror Check	Madness Check
0	14	16	19
1-2	13	15	18
3-4	12	14	17
5-6	11	13	16
7-8	10	12	15
9-10	9	11	14
11-12	7	10	13
13-14	5	9	12
15-16	3	7	11
17-18	2	5	10
19-20	2	2	8

Level Advancement

When adventuring, priest characters acquire experience points to reflect their increased ability to defend their beliefs and use the powers granted to them by their deity. Priests follow **Table 89: Priest Level Advancement** to determine their level, based upon the number of experience points that they have acquired.

Table 89: Priest Experience Levels

Character Level	Cleric	Anchorite	Hit Dice
1	0	0	1d8*
2	1500	2000	2d8
3	3000	4000	3d8
4	6000	7500	4d8

5	13000	12500	5d8
6	27500	20000	6d8
7	55000	35000	7d8
8	110000	60000	8d8
9	225000	90000	9d8
10	450000	125000	9d8+2
11	675000	200000	9d8+4
12	900000	300000	9d8+6
13	1125000	750000	9d8+8
14	1350000	1500000	9d8+10
15	1575000	3000000	9d8+12
16	1800000	3500000	9d8+14
17	2025000	4000000	9d8+16
18	2250000	4500000	9d8+18
19	2475000	5000000	9d8+20
20	2700000	5500000	9d8+22

* Player Characters begin with 8 hit points plus Constitution adjustments

Spells

Priests are potent spellcasters, although they are not the equals of wizards. They must always use their spells (and other abilities, for that matter) to further the interests of their church.

Table 90: Priests Spell Progression

Priest	Spell Level						
Level	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6***	**7****
1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
5	3	3	1	-	-	-	-
6	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
7	4	3	3	2	1	-	-
8	3	3	3	2	-	-	-
9	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
10	4	4	3	3	2	-	-
11	5	4	4	3	2	1	-
12	6	5	5	3	2	2	-
13	6	6	6	4	2	2	-
14	6	6	6	5	3	2	1
15	6	6	6	6	4	2	1
16	7	7	7	6	4	3	1
17	7	7	7	7	5	3	2
18	8	8	8	8	6	4	2
19	9	9	8	8	6	4	2
20	9	9	9	8	7	5	2

* Spells on this level can be used only by priests with Wisdom score or 17 or better.

** Spells on this level can be used only by priests with Wisdom score or 18 or better.

Spheres of Influence

Priest spells are grouped into general categories called spheres of influence. The nature of a given priest's faith determines which spells he has access to and how great his access is.

There are twenty-four spheres, of which only one (the all sphere) is open to any priest character. The elemental sphere is subdivided into four lesser spheres, making a total of twenty-eight spheres if one counts these separately. A priest who has no access to a sphere cannot cast any of the spells that fall within it. Such magic conflicts with the actions and goals of his church and must therefore be shunned utterly.

If a priest has minor access to a sphere, he is limited to 1st- through 3rd-level spells. Higher-level spells remain beyond the reach of the character. Every priest has minor access to the all sphere, which contains spells basic to any manner of clergyman. If a priest has major access to a sphere, he may cast any and all of the spells in it. This assumes, of course, that his level permits him to do so. (A Ist-level priest cannot cast a 5th-level spell simply because he has major access to the sphere that it is in.) For further information on creating priests of specific mythoi, see Chapter 3 of the Player's Handbook.

The spheres of priestly magic include the following:

All: As mentioned above, minor access to this sphere is granted to all characters. Every priest, regardless of his beliefs, must cast these spells at one time or another.

Animal: This gives a priest power over the beasts of the forest and the other animals of the world. They are central to those faiths that stress the importance of nature and the environment in general.

Astral: The spells in this sphere reflect both the ethereal and astral aspects that dwell within every person. Priests who deal in the transcendental nature of the spirit generally have access to these spells.

Chaos: This allows priests to break down the very laws by which the universe functions. They are unpredictable and seldom used by anyone of nonchaotic alignment.

Charm: This allows a priest to alter or even control the thoughts, actions, or emotions of another. Good and neutral characters must always be careful when using spells from this sphere, for free will is often an important tenet of such faiths.

Combat: This sphere is for those priests who are expected to fight the battles of their faith. As warriors and crusaders, they often depend upon their weapons as much as their magic.

Creation: Priests with access to this sphere can call objects into being from thin air. In most cases, such things are of a sustaining nature (like food and drink), but more dangerous objects can be called into play, as evidenced by the blade barrier spell.

Divination: The spells of divination acquire (and sometimes conceal) information about people, places, and objects. Oracles and prophets have ready access to these spells.

Elemental: This allows their users to direct the raw elements of nature: air, earth, fire, and water. Priests who have access to such potent forces are creatures to be reckoned with. Elemental air is a lesser sphere that includes only those elemental spells that deal in the element of air. It is often the purview of priests whose gods control the weather or some aspect of it. The spells grouped under the tangential elemental sphere of earth provide a variety of effects, all of which are based on the

actions of soil, rock, and minerals. Elemental fire is the third of the elemental spheres; these spells are dangerous and powerful. They reflect both the nurturing warmth of the hearth and the deadly heat of the inferno. Elemental water, the last of the four elemental spheres, deals with the magic of water in all its forms. Priests with access to these spells can call forth life-giving springs or breathe freely while swimming beneath the sea.

Guardian: This sphere is an assortment of defensive spells designed to provide a measure of protection for the priest and his followers. A common effect for these spells, provides for an actual guardian creature to defend the spellcaster. These spells are common to the priests of a great many gods.

Healing: These spells are used to cure disease and tend to the wounded. The average person associates most of the spells in this sphere with members of the priest group.

Law: This allows a priest to reinforce the orderly nature of the universe. It provides for stability during times of confusion and anarchy. These spells are anathema to those of chaotic or neutral alignment.

Necromantic: These spells give a priest power over the dead and undead. These are especially dangerous in Ravenloft, and wise characters will use them infrequently, if at all.

Numbers: This sphere is an unusual one that is closely tied to that of law. Priests with access to this sphere can affect the laws of chance and probability, causing the impossible to happen and the certain to fail. Intelligence of 13 or higher is required to use these spells.

Plant: This sphere complements that of animals in giving a priest power over nature. Those with access to these spells have the ability to call upon the flora of the world to serve and defend them in their times of need.

Protection: Like those spells in the guardian sphere, these are primarily defensive in nature. They allow a character to resist deadly environmental extremes and avoid attacks that might injure or kill him. Most warrior priests rely on these spells to defend themselves in combat.

Summoning: Like the spells of the necromantic sphere, those in this group can be dangerous to use on the Demiplane of Dread. While the least of them, like *animal summoning*, carries no great danger with it, the more potent spells do. A priest who makes use of a *conjure elemental* spell must bear in mind the fact that, while the creature will arrive as anticipated, it will be unable to leave Ravenloft. Most beings are not pleased with this fate and try to avenge themselves upon the person who brought them into the Mists.

Sun: This is a powerful sphere, especially for those who would battle the ranks of the undead. The lower-level spells in this school provide for illumination and guidance, while the most powerful (*sunray*) can obliterate even the greatest of the undead.

Thought: Priests who place importance on learning and science find these spells especially useful. They overlap the abilities of the psionicist (described later in this appendix) and give the priest the ability to dominate weaker minds. Only those with Intelligence of 13 or better can use of these spells.

Time: These spells enable a character to warp the flow of time and, in rare cases, to reshape past events. The potential for disastrous accidents is high with such magic, however, so priests with access to the sphere of time must exercise great care.

Travelers: This sphere brings together a group of spells that can speed the weary upon their way and ease the burden of any pilgrim. They are common among priests whose gods are the patrons of messengers, explorers, and the like.

War: This contains spells designed to bolster the morale of troops and facilitate the actions of an army. It does not, although

common folk do not often realize this, contain many spells of a combative nature.

Wards: These spells give priests control over the physical properties of various regions. They often allow a priest to exclude some manner of being from the area in question or, conversely, to confine someone.

Weather: These spells allow a priest to call down storms, bring a cooling breeze, or direct a stroke of lightning at his enemies. This sphere is common to priests of nature, storms, and the like.

Magical Items

Priest characters have access to all manner of magical items. Not only can they use potions, protection scrolls, magical armor, and any magical weapon that they normally wield, but they can also use priest scrolls and several other magical items made specifically for priests.

Turning Undead

Both clerics and anchorites can turn undead in Ravenloft but at different rates. As a result, each of the turning undead tables are listed in each section. However, another effect can alter a priest's ability to turn undead. It is called the "Sinkhole of Evil" effect.

The "Sinkhole of Evil" Effect

If the evil surrounding undead intensifies, the priest's ability to turn them wanes. Ravenloft's lands are riddled with sinkholes of evil. So foul are these places that priests suffer penalties, from -1 to -4 when turning undead. Also, even in a relatively calm area, the presence of an evil master reduces the priest's efficacy. In most domains, when the lord is standing within three hundred feet of his or her undead minions, priests suffer a -2 penalty in turning attempts. Pity the poor cleric who tries these powers when both the lord and land act against him, for the modifiers are cumulative!

Starting Wealth

A priest character begins play with a stipend of 3d6xl0 gold pieces. This money has been allocated to him by his church and can be used freely to purchase starting equipment for the character. It cannot be loaned to other characters or used for any other purpose, as it does not truly belong to the priest. After he has purchased his starting equipment, the priest must return all but 1d4 gold pieces to the church.

Clerics

Ability Requirement: Wisdom 9+
Prime Requisite: Wisdom
Races Allowed: Any except Half-Vistani



Clerics are holy men who travel the land in a quest to promote their values (usually those of good). They defend their church against its enemies and give aid to those who share their religion or values. A priest who does not fit into any other category is assumed to be a cleric.

Ability Requirements

In order to become a cleric, a character must have a Wisdom score of at least 9. Spells cast by a character with a score below 13 have a chance of failing, however, so a higher score is recommended. If a cleric has a Wisdom score of 16 or better, he receives a 10% bonus to any experience points that he earns.

Because clerics deal with people on a regular basis, a high Charisma score is valuable to them as well. Of course, the benefits to be gained from a good Constitution and Dexterity score cannot be overlooked, for many clerics serve a secondary role as warriorlike defenders of the faith.

Alignment

Cleric player characters can choose any alignment except evil, although they most frequently mirror the values of their patron deity. Generally, good clerics are healers and protectors; neutral clerics are often mystics and ascetics who value all the diverse things of the world. Lawful clerics seek to bring order and often work with government officials. Chaotic clerics think of the needs of the individual over those of society and foster the belief that all must pay homage to the gods in their own way.

Arms and Armor

Clerics are allowed more freedom in this category than any other class of character except those of the warrior group. A cleric can wear whatever armor he wishes, even the full plate mail of a mounted knight. Similarly, he can freely use a shield to defend himself against attack.

Clerics are forbidden to use edged weapons, although the variety of arms open to them is still quite extensive. In game terms, this means that a cleric can only use bludgeoning weapons, not those that pierce or slash.

Spells and Magical Items

While clerics depend heavily on their weapons and armor, they would be little more than lesser warriors if it were not for their magical abilities. A cleric can cast a number of spells (as indicated in the general information about priests), based on his level and Wisdom score.

Clerics created in Ravenloft have major access to most spheres, although they have only minor access to the spells of the elemental spheres and no access to the animal, chaos, law, plant, and weather spheres. In addition, a cleric has access to the spheres of numbers and thought only if he has an Intelligence score of 13 or better.

Turn/Control Undead

Good-aligned clerics can also exert the power of their faith to drive away (or even destroy) undead creatures. Neutral clerics can attempt to either turn the undead or control them and order them to do their bidding. **Table 91: Turning Undead (Cleric)** indicates the chance of success that a cleric has of turning undead while in Ravenloft.

Table 91: Turning Undead (Cleric)

Undead Type/	**Level of the Cleric**											
Level	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10-11**	**12-13**	**14+**
Skeleton/1 HD	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*
Zombie	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*
Ghoul/2 HD	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*
Shadow/3-4 HD	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*
Wight/5 HD	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*
Ghast	-		20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*
Wraith/6 HD	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1
Mummy/7 HD	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1
Spectre/8 HD	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4
Vampire/9 HD	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7
Ghost/10 HD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10
Lich/11+ HD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13
Special	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16

* If the undead cannot flee at its maximum movement rate or get out of the cleric's sight, it is destroyed.

Followers and Holdings

Clerics in Ravenloft do not attract followers or gain the right to establish a religious stronghold as their peers in other campaign worlds do. This is not to say that an individual character cannot opt to do so, only that he has no special advantage when doing so. In most domains, of course, a cleric who wishes to build a temple of any sort must be careful to neither run afoul of the region's lord or become a pawn of that malevolent creature.

Anchorites

Ability Requirement: Wisdom 12+
Charisma 15+
Prime Requisite: Wisdom
Races Allowed: Human



This unusual class of priest exists only on the Demiplane of Dread. His mystical abilities stem from an unknown source, perhaps the dark powers themselves or perhaps something less. Whatever their source, however, these characters lose all magical abilities if they somehow leave Ravenloft.

Anchorites serve the church of Ezra. This unusual organization is a multi-denominational church that, like the anchorites, exists only in Ravenloft. While all branches of the church see Ezra in more or less the same way (as a defender, healer, and protector of her followers), specific practices and beliefs differ greatly. The church of Ezra is detailed more fully in Chapter Five: Secret Societies.

Ability Requirements

In order for a character to be an anchorite, he must have a Wisdom score of 12 or greater. This reflects his understanding of the ways of man and the many mysteries of the Demiplane of Dread. If an anchorite has a Wisdom of 16 or better, he receives a 10% bonus to any experience points he earns.

Further, an anchorite is expected to promote the actions and interests of the church. This task often requires him to deal with people from all walks of life. In order to promote success at these actions, all anchorite characters must have a Charisma of at least 15.

Alignment

The primary alignment of the Church of Ezra is lawful neutral. As one travels throughout the domains of Ravenloft, however, it becomes clear that temples deviate a great deal from each other. Any given anchorite is of the same alignment as the temple in which he studied for the priesthood.

An anchorite player character is allowed to deviate one step from lawful neutral in his alignment (although he cannot choose evil). Thus, he can be lawful neutral, true neutral, or lawful good. The most common alignments within the church are those of a lawful bent, with true neutral being encountered far less frequently.

Arms and Armor

Although priests in general can wear virtually any type of armor, anchorites can wear only metal armor, or none at all. Lighter forms of armor do not support the accepted image of Ezra and anchorites as protectors and defenders of the people. Those who opt to travel without armor are showing their faith in Ezra's protection, while those who garb themselves in steel are setting an example for others.

When it comes to weapons, however, somewhat less unity exists within the church. Anchorites of lawful good or lawful neutral alignment, for example, must adhere to the normal restrictions for clerics (that is, no edged weapons). Those of a true neutral alignment believe that it is acceptable for a priest of Ezra to use edged weapons, but require the use of a shield, so that only one-handed weapons are acceptable.

Spells and Magical Items

Anchorites use spells and magical items just as other priests do. The spheres of magic that a priest of Ezra has access to are determined by his alignment (see **Table 92**).

Table 92: Anchorite Spheres

Lawful Neutral	True Neutral	Lawful Good
All (M)	All (M)	All (M)
Charm (M)	Charm (M)	Charm (M)
Divination (M)	Divination (M)	Divination (M)
Guardian (m)	Guardian (M)	Guardian (m)
Healing (M)	Healing (M)	Healing (M)
Protection (M)	Protection (M)	Protection (M)
Wards (m)	Wards (m)	Wards (m)
Law (M)	Wards (m)	Wards (M)
Weather (m)	Chaos (m)	Sun (m)

(M) denotes major access to the sphere
(m) denotes minor access to the sphere

Duties of the Archorite

As a follower of Ezra, the anchorite is charged with the protection of the weak, the care of the sick, and the general betterment of the human condition. The exact manner in which each of the four alignments enacts these tenets varies, but the basic teachings of the church remain the same.

Anchorites of any alignment frown upon mistreatment or needless suffering of the innocent. They help the injured and show some degree of mercy to their enemies. Their healing powers are used without call for compensation or the need for obligation. Lastly, an anchorite avoids combat when possible, although they are certainly not pacifists, recognizing the need for battle from time to time.

Sanctuary of the Church

Any anchorite has the ability to seek shelter and safe haven in any temple dedicated to the worship of Ezra. The exact interpretation of "safe haven" varies depending upon the similarities in the alignment of the anchorite and that of the temple clergy he is sheltering with. At the very least, however, the anchorite is fed and clothed, his wounds tended to, and his presence within the temple kept secret. Greater levels of cooperation might even allow the anchorite to receive special equipment or information that will help him in his work.

Turning Undead

An anchorite of any alignment has the ability to turn undead just as a cleric does. No follower of Ezra has the ability to command undead, however.

Table 93: Turning Undead (Anchorite)

Undead Type/	**Level of the Ancrite**											
Level	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10-11**	**12-13**	**14+**
Skeleton/1 HD	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*
Zombie	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*
Ghoul/2 HD	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*
Shadow/3-4 HD	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*
Wight/5 HD	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*
Ghast	-		20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*
Wraith/6 HD	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1
Mummy/7 HD	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1
Spectre/8 HD	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7	4
Vampire/9 HD	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10	7
Ghost/10 HD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13	10
Lich/11+ HD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16	13
Special	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	19	16

* If the undead cannot flee at its maximum movement rate or get out of the anchorite's sight, it is destroyed.

Mist Walking

Upon reaching 9th level, an anchorite can travel from any domain to any other domain that is physically linked to it (in other words, part of the same Cluster or another part of the Core) simply by stepping into a pocket of Mist. The character emerges at his destination by stepping out of a similar cloud of vapor. This ability can be used once per month.

Upon reaching the 13th level of experience, the anchorite gains the ability to bring another character with him on his voyage through the Mists. Each additional level allows the priest to bring another character with him, so that at 20th level a party of nine characters (the anchorite plus eight companions) could walk the Mists.

At 15th level, an anchorite can use his Mist walking ability to travel from any domain to any other domain. Thus, he can leave the Core behind and travel to a Cluster, Island, or Pocket domain. However, he cannot take any companions with him.

An anchorite's Mist walking ability does not permit him to enter or exit a domain whose borders have been closed. Should he attempt to leave a closed domain, the lord of that realm is instantly made aware that someone has attempted to escape from him. Further, he can sense the exact location in which this challenge to his authority was made.

Shield of Ezra

Upon reaching 6th level, anchorites can create the *shield of Ezra* three times per day. This magical barrier requires a single round to call into being and remains in place for a number of rounds equal to half the experience level of the anchorite (round down). While under the protection of Ezra, the anchorite character is encased in a faint glow. A *dispel magic* or similar spell causes the shield of Ezra to dissipate if the anchorite fails a saving throw vs. spell.

If the anchorite is of lawful neutral alignment, the shield of Ezra makes the anchorite immune to attacks by weapons of less than +1 enchantment. Nonmagical creatures of 4+1 or greater Hit Dice can still harm the character, but lesser ones are unable to do so.

If the anchorite is of true neutral alignment, the shield of Ezra gives the anchorite partial, or even full, immunity to any magical attack that causes physical damage. In cases where the spell does not allow a saving throw, then the anchorite automatically receives the ability to make a saving throw to prevent half of the spell's damage. If the spell normally allows a saving throw, then the anchorite automatically gains the listed benefit and can roll to see if the rest of the damage is negated. This protection does not extend to any others around him, so that a *fireball* thrown at him will still harm any others within the area of effect.

If the anchorite is of lawful good alignment, the shield of Ezra makes the anchorite immune to attacks by metal weapons of a certain category. Examples of categories include swords (scimitar, bastard sword, long sword, broad sword, etc.), axes (hand axe, battle axe), and polearms (glaive, halberd, bardiche, voulge, guisarme, glaive-guisarme, guisarme-voulge). Specific decisions about which weapons are related should be left to the Dungeon Master. Dungeon Masters should note that an arrow with a steel head is certainly considered a metal weapon (in the missile weapon category, for example) for this purpose. Even magical weapons made of metal are blocked by this aura.

Rogues

No character group is so diverse as the rogue. Rogues range from the intrepid scout to the lowly thug; from the highly trained spy to the nimble burglar. Because of this variety, rogues can use a great many different weapons, armor, and magical devices.

Hit Dice

Rogues are not exceptional fighters and tend to have fewer hit points than most classes. Thus, they use six-sided Hit Dice. A newly generated rogue character has a full 6 hit points, +/- any adjustment for his Constitution score. Upon advancing to 2nd level, and at each level thereafter until after he attains 10th level, the rogue receives an additional 1d6 hit points (again, adjusted for his Constitution score). When the rogue reaches 11th level, he receives a flat increase of two additional hit points. At this point. Constitution bonuses no longer apply.

Attack Rolls

A rogue's attack roll reflects his ability to attack. Although each of the groups begins with a THAC0 of 20, a rogue's THAC0 improves by one point for every two experience levels. When a rogue attains 3rd level, his THAC0 becomes 19. At 5th level, his THAC0 becomes 18, and so on.

Saving Throws

All types of rogues use the same table when determining their saving throws for various types of attack. Rogues perform better when avoiding attacks that can be dodged and tend to suffer more from those that require physical resilience.

Table 94: Rogue Saving Throws

Character Level	Paralyzation, Poison, or Death Magic	Rod, Staff, or Wand	Petrification or Polymorph*	Breath Weapon**	Spell***
1-4	13	14	12	16	15
5-8	12	12	11	15	13
9-12	11	10	10	14	11
13-16	10	8	9	13	9
17-20	9	6	8	12	7
21+	8	4	7	11	5

* Excluding polymorph wand attacks.
** Excluding those that cause petrificafion or polymorph.
*** Excluding thosefor which another saving throw type is specified, such as death magic, petrification, polymorph, etc.

Fear, Horror and Madness

Rogues are seldom the bravest folk. They are not cowards, but their courage relies on their ability to predict what is coming and plan accordingly. When something happens that isn't according to their detailed schemes, they can be thrown by it. However, their familiarity with the dark side of life makes them less likely to panic when exposed to the bizarre.

Table 95: Rogue Fear, Horror and Madness Checks

Character Level	Fear Check	Horror Check	Madness Check
0	16	16	19
1-2	15	15	18
3-4	14	14	17
5-6	13	13	16
7-8	12	12	15
9-10	11	11	14
11-12	9	10	13
13-14	7	9	12
15-16	5	7	11
17-18	3	5	10
19-20	2	3	8

Level Advancement

Like all characters, rogues accumulate knowledge as they explore the world. In game terms, this is reflected through the gathering of experience points. **Table 96** indicates the level of a rogue character with a given experience point total.

Table 96: Rogue Experience Levels

Character Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice
1	0	1d6*
2	1250	2d6
3	2500	3d6
4	5000	4d6
5	10000	5d6
6	20000	6d6
7	40000	7d6
8	70000	8d6
9	110000	9d6
10	160000	10d6
11	220000	10d6+2
12	440000	10d6+4
13	660000	10d4+6
14	880000	10d4+8
15	1100000	10d6+10
16	1320000	10d6+12
17	1540000	10d6+14
18	1760000	10d6+16
19	1980000	10d6+18
20	2200000	10d6+20

* Player Characters begin with 6 hit points plus Constitution adjustments

Starting Wealth

A rogue character begins with 2d6xl0 gold pieces. Exactly how he came by this money is. often a question best left unanswered. The character is free to spend some or all of this money on equipment at the start of the game, with the rest being pocketed for expenses during play.

Thieves

Ability Requirement: Dexterity 9+
Prime Requisite: Dexterity
Races Allowed: Any



When one thinks of the rogue, one most commonly thinks of the thief. These ne'er-do-wells come in a great variety, but all have a dark and sinister side to their personalities. This is not to say that no good-aligned thieves exist in the world, but they are certainly the exception rather than the rule.

Ability Requirements

Many aspects of a thief's life depend upon his agility and coordination. When picking locks or disarming traps, a thief must have steady hands. When hiding in shadows or moving silently, he must be as nimble as a stalking cat. To reflect this, all thieves must have a Dexterity score of at least 9. If a thief character has a Dexterity score of 16 or better, he receives a 10% bonus to any experience points he earns.

Because the nature of their work often has its intellectual side, these characters generally benefit from a high Intelligence score. When one is trying to decode a cryptic treasure map or outthink the agents of the law, the benefit of keen wits cannot be overstated.

Alignment

The majority of these characters are disreputable. Because of this, no thief can be of lawful good alignment. Lawful-aligned thieves of any type are by far the minority, although they are encountered from time to time. As a rule, they have ties to some manner of thieves' guild. Neutral and chaotic thieves tend to be loners who are out to improve their standard of living at the expense of everyone else. They give their loyalty to very few people and are trusted by fewer in turn - even their closest friends sometimes have troubles with their motives.

Arms and Armor

Rogues generally have more skill avoiding combat than they have participating in it. Because of this, their choice of weapons and defenses is somewhat restricted.

Generally, a rogue wears only nonmetal armor. The exception to this is elven chain mail, which is seldom available on the Demiplane of Dread. When wearing any armor other than leather, however, a rogue's thieving abilities (described later) are penalized. Rogues have not been trained in the use of shields and, thus, cannot employ them in combat.

Rogues employ a variety of weapons, although they favor those that can be used subtly and can be easily concealed. Among the weapons generally available to rogues are clubs, daggers, darts, hand crossbows, knives, lassos, short bows, slings, broad swords, long swords, short swords, and staves. An individual Dungeon Master may allow a rogue to use additional weapons, depending upon the type of campaign he runs.

Spells and Magical Items

Thieves have access to a fairly diverse assortment of magical items, although they cannot actually cast spells themselves. In addition to magical forms of those weapons and armor that they can normally employ, thieves can use many rings, potions, and miscellaneous magical items. At high levels, they even gain the ability to cast spells stored on magical scrolls (see "Using Scrolls").

Thieving Skills

A thief character has eight special skills available to him that enable him to survive in the world. Although all thieves have some skill in seven of these talents, the nature of each character indicates what he is best at. A burglar, for instance, might be highly skilled at climbing walls and opening locks. One of his fellows who makes his living as a cutpurse might be well versed in picking pockets and hiding in shadows. **Table 97: Thieving Skill Base Scores** indicates the base percentage chance of success that any thief character has when he begins his adventuring career.

Table 97: Thieving Skill Base Scores

Thieving Skill	Base Score
Pick Pockets	15%
Open Locks	10%
Find/Remove Traps	5%
Move Silently	10%
Hide in Shadows	5%
Detect Noise	15%
Climb Walls	60%
Read Languages	0%

Depending upon the race of the character, certain adjustments are made to these skills (see **Table 98**).

Table 98: Thieving Skill Racial Adjustments

Skill Name	Dwarf	Half-Elf	Gnome	Elf	Halfling
Pick Pockets	-	+5%	-	+10%	+5%
Open Locks	+10%	-5%	+5%	-	+5%
Find/Remove Traps	+15%	-	+10%	-	+5%
Move Silently	-	+5%	+5%	-	+10%
Hide in Shadows	-	+10%	+5%	+5%	+15%
Detect Noise	-	+5%	+10%	-	+5%
Climb Walls	-10%	-	-15%	-	-15%
Read Languages	-5%	-	-	-	-5%

In addition to these adjustments, a character's Dexterity score can further modify his base chance of success (see **Table 99**).

Table 99: Thieving Skill Dexterity Adjustments

Dexterity Score	Pick Pockets	Open Locks	F/R Traps	Move Silently	Hide in Shadows
9	-15%	-10%	-10%	-20%	-10%
10	-10%	-5%	-10%	-15%	-5%
11	-5%	-	-5%	-10%	-
12	-	-	-	-5%	-
13-15	-	-	-	-	-
16	-	+5%	-	-	-
17	+5%	+10%	-	+5%	+5%
18	+10%	+15%	+5%	+10%	+10%
19	+15%	+20%	+10%	+15%	+15%

A final modification is applied to some of the thief's skills if he wears any armor other than leather (see **Table 100**).

Table 100: Thieving Skill Armor Adjustments

Thieving Skill	No Armor	Elven Chain	Padded or Studded Leather
Pick Pockets	+5%	-20%	-30%
Open Locks	-	-5%	-10%
Find/Remove Traps	-	-5%	-10%
Move Silently	+10%	-10%	-20%
Hide in Shadows	+5%	-10%	-20%
Detect Noise	-	-5%	-10%
Climb Walls	+10%	-20%	-30%
Read Languages	-	-	-

Starting Characters

After a 1st-level thief's base chance of success with each of these skills has been determined, the player is given a chance to customize his character. Thus, if a player wishes his character to be especially skilled in a given area, he has the power to make it so.

Every player of a thief character starts with a pool of sixty points that can be added to the various skills. No more than thirty points can be added to a specific skill and no skill can be increased beyond 95%. Thus, there is always at least a 5% chance that any thief will fail when using one of these special talents.

Experienced Characters

Every time that a character increases in level, the player receives an additional thirty points that he can use to improve his skills. No more than fifteen points can be assigned to a given skill, and no skill can be increased beyond 95%, including adjustments for race and Dexterity.

If the Dungeon Master wishes, a player can be required to use these points only to improve skills that have been used in recent adventures. This is strictly an optional rule, however.

Skill Definitions

A good deal of leeway exists in exact uses to which the various thief skills are put. The ability to pick pockets, for example, includes not only the talent of lifting a wallet or coinpurse from a pocket but also other feats that fall under the heading of "sleight of hand." To help Dungeon Masters and players adjudicate uses of these skills fairly during play, each talent has been described below.

When rolling for results on most of these skills, it would be better for the Dungeon Master to roll so that the outcome of the roll is hidden from the players. This allows an element of suspense to be added to the game. For example, when the Dungeon Master tells the thief character that he has not found any traps, the player must decide whether this means that there are no traps, or that there are traps but his character did not find them.

Pick Pockets: As mentioned above, this skill extends to cover most feats that require quick fingers and a bit of misdirection. It can be used to palm small objects, cut a purse from someone's belt, or plant a piece of incriminating evidence on a dupe.

A failed attempt does not automatically result in discovery by the would-be victim or other witnesses. After an attempt to pick pockets has been made, whether it succeeds or fails, the victim has a percentage chance equal to three times his level to notice what has transpired. Thus, a 15th-level victim has a 45% chance to notice that someone has tried to rob him. A 0-level character notices a failed attempt only on a percentile dice roll of "00" exactly. Note that it is possible for an attempt to succeed and be noticed by the victim at the same time.

A failed attempt to pick pockets does not normally preclude another bid by the character. Thus, a thief can repeatedly try to pick the pocket of a wealthy target in a crowded market until he either succeeds or is caught.

Open Locks: This ability extends to all kinds of locks including those that require keys, combinations, or puzzles. If the Dungeon Master feels that the lock requires a set of picks to open (as is the case with most padlocks), he can impose a penalty on efforts made without such devices. As a rule, these penalties range from -5% to -60%, depending upon the type of tools employed. The quality of the lock also plays a part in the thief's chance of success. **Table 101** indicates the modification for locks of various craftsmanship. Most locks are assumed to be of good quality.

Any attempt to pick a lock, whether it succeeds or fails, requires 1d10 rounds. If the thief fails in his effort, the lock has proven too difficult for him. He has no chance of success with that particular lock until he increases in level.

Table 101: Lock Quality Adjustments

Quality	Adjustment
Wretched	+30%
Poor	+15%
Good	0%
Excellent	-20%
Superior	-40%
Masterful	-60%

Find/Remove Traps: This skill enables a thief to notice and disarm small mechanical traps and alarms. These include such potentially deadly hazards as poisoned needles, spring blades, dart throwers, gas jets, pits, and warning bells. This ability does not extend to include large traps like deadfalls, crushing wall panels, or other large perils.

Searching for a trap takes 1d10 rounds and requires that the thief carefully touch and examine the object or area in question. If the thief succeeds in his endeavor, the Dungeon Master informs him that he has found a trap and explains its general nature (for example, "a small tripwire runs across the tunnel ahead") but not its exact function. If he fails, or succeeds where no trap exists, he is told that he finds nothing unusual. Thus, it is up to the player to decide whether or not a trap simply

escaped his character's notice.

Disarming a found trap also requires 1d10 rounds. If the thief succeeds at this roll, the trap is disarmed safely. If the thief fails his attempt, but the roll was not between 96 and 100, the trap is still intact and beyond his current ability to defeat. Only after he gains another level of experience can the thief try to defeat the trap again. If the roll is between 96 and 100, the thief botched the attempt badly and set off the trap. It is possible to use this skill with magical or invisible traps. In such cases, however, the thief's chances of success are cut in half.

Move Silently: A thief can attempt to move silently at any time, although he must make a successful skill check for every round that he does so. Note that a thief always believes he is moving silently, even if he fails the check. While moving silently, a thief's movement rate is reduced to 1/3 of what it would be if he were simply walking.

Hide in Shadows: Thieves are skilled at vanishing into patches of darkness and then springing out to catch their victims unawares. This ability applies to any attempt by the thief to hide in dark corners, bushes, and other places. It can only be used when the thief is not directly observed by another creature. While the thief is hidden, he can attempt only slow, subtle movements. Once a thief is hidden, he can remain out of sight for an unlimited period of time provided that he does not move and nothing happens to otherwise indicate his position.

Animals and other creatures with exceptional senses of smell and the like may detect a hidden thief no matter what his die roll, although infravision provides no bonus in spotting a hidden character. Magical spells (like detect invisibility) and various psionic powers reveal a hidden thief as well.

Detect Noise: Thieves, at least those who live long, have trained themselves to notice subtle changes in the world around them. This ability reflects their skill in hearing faint sounds that others would miss.

This skill can be used as needed by the thief but requires him to take a few preliminary actions. The thief and his companions must be motionless and silent. He must also remove any form of helmet, hat, or hood. After these conditions have been satisfied, then the thief must listen intently for one round. In many cases, the thief can identify the general nature of the sounds he detects (if any). For example, a thief near an underground stream might recognize the trickle of water. If a door or other barrier stands between the thief and the sound he hears, identification becomes much more difficult.

Climb Walls: This ability applies to any attempt by the thief to climb sheer cliffs, vertical walls, or other surfaces that would be beyond the skill of the normal man to surmount. The thief's chances of success are adjusted to reflect the nature of the surface being climbed in accordance with **Table 102: Thief's Climbing Modifiers**. Note that the adjustments on the chart are in addition to those already listed for the character's race and the type of armor he wears.

Table 102: Thief's Climbing Modifiers

Situation	Adjustment
Abundant handholds	+40%
Using an anchored rope	+55%
Surface slopes inward	+25%
Moderate encumbrance	-5%
Heavy encumbrance	-10%
Severe encumbrance	-15%
Maximum encumbrance	-20%
Surface is slippery (wet or crumbling)	-25%
Surface is slick (icy or slimy)	-40%
Character wounded below half hit points	-10%

A check is required whenever the thief attempts to scale a height of greater than ten feet. Failure makes it impossible for the thief to attempt the climb without moving to another location (generally at least half a mile away) or getting additional help or equipment. Exceptionally high walls (over one hundred feet or so) generally require additional checks.

Read Languages: Because of their travels and exposure, thieves often pick up bits and pieces of many different languages. This gives them the ability to puzzle out the general meaning of documents written in languages that they are not actually fluent in.

If the Dungeon Master agrees that a language is similar to those with which the thief is familiar, a single die roll is attempted. Success at the die roll does not bestow the ability to read other documents in the language; a new die roll must be made for another document. In addition, success gives the character a general understanding of the material but leaves many specifics unclear at best. For example, if a character has a 30% chance to read a document and succeeds at his roll, then he understands about 30% of what was written. If a thief is unsuccessful at reading a document, he must wait until he achieves another experience level before trying to read that document again.

Backstabbing

In addition to the thief skills just described, all thieves have the ability to employ a special attack known as a backstab. A successful backstab greatly increases the damage inflicted by the character.

In order for an attack to be considered a backstab, several conditions must be met. First, the target must be either unaware of the thief's presence or have failed his surprise check. Second, the attack must come from behind the victim. Third, the victim must be generally humanoid in shape. Last, the thief must be able to reach the center of the target's back. Thus, if he were attacking a giant, the thief would probably have to be on a ledge or dropping down on the creature from above.

If all of these conditions exist, the thief makes a normal attack roll. Because of his skill, he gains a +4 bonus to this roll (instead of the normal +2 for a rear attack), and the target's shield and Dexterity bonuses are negated. Should the thief manage to land his blow, the normal damage that his attack inflicts is multiplied according to **Table 103**. The multiplier applies to the amount of damage before modifiers for Strength or weapon bonuses are added.

Table 103: Thief Backstab Multipliers

Thief's Level	Damage Miltiplier
1-4	x2
5-8	x3
9-12	x4
13+	x5

Thieves's Cant

Like thieves in other realms, the rogues of Ravenloft can communicate with each other in a sort of pidgin-language known as thieves' cant. Although not a true language, this collection of slang and colloquialisms serves to identify a thief to his fellows and make outsiders instantly recognizable. Thieves' cant has its limitations, of course. It can be used only to discuss matters relevant to the profession of thieving.

In order for two thieves to converse in the cant, they must share a common language. In many cases, this makes it difficult or impossible for a thief who makes his home on the Demiplane of Dread to converse freely with a thief from, say, the Toril or Athas setting.

Using Scrolls

When a thief reaches 10th level, he gains the ability to employ spells recorded on magical scrolls as if he were a wizard or priest. Because the thief's understanding of magical script is far from perfect, he has a base 25% chance to read it incorrectly. If this happens, the magic is triggered in reverse. Thus, an attack spell would harm the thief while a beneficial one would aid his enemies. The exact effect of such mishaps is up to the Dungeon Master.

Followers and Holdings

Unlike thieves in other lands, those who reside on the Demiplane of Dread do not automatically assemble a collection of followers or build a stronghold at high levels. Like members of the other classes, they recognize that attracting such folk can also draw the eye of a domain lord, something that even the most defiant rogue is reluctant to do. However, this does not prevent them for arranging for some kind of bolthole to flee to when things go badly for them.

Gypsies

Ability Requirement:	Constitution 13+
	Intelligence 13+
	Wisdom 13+
	Charisma 15+
Prime Requisite:	Dexterity, Charisma
Races Allowed:	Half-elf, Half-Vistani, Human



When most folk think of gypsies in Ravenloft, they picture the mysterious Vistani. While it is certainly true that those wanderers of the Mists are often called by the common name "gypsy", they are not the only such folk who dwell on the Demiplane of Dread. Player character gypsies are not Vistani, although many of these oft-called vagabonds do have some hint of Mist walker blood in them.

Ability Requirements

In order to be a gypsy, a character must have Constitution, Intelligence, and Wisdom scores of at least 13. In addition, his Charisma score must also be at least 15. If a gypsy has Dexterity and Charisma scores of 16 or better, he receives a 10% bonus to any experience points he earns.

The former requirements reflect the fact that the gypsy has traveled far and wide. He must be strong enough to survive the rigors of traveling and should have gathered a great deal of knowledge and common sense in his journeys.

The latter requirement indicates the aura of mystery and awe that surrounds these people. Sadly, while this makes them stand out from the common folk of Ravenloft, it also brands them as outsiders - and citizens of the Demiplane of Dread seldom trust outsiders.

Alignment

The gypsies are a mysterious people who live by a rigid code of personal honor and laws. Because their values often differ from those of the communities that they visit, however, many people regard gypsies as a wild and lawless breed. In truth, however, all such characters must be either lawful or neutral. No matter how much the villagers of Ravenloft might like to think so, no chaotic gypsies exist. Also, no player character gypsies can be of an evil alignment.

Of course, this doesn't mean that all gypsies are virtuous and kind. In fact, the ranks of non-Vistani gypsies are evenly divided between good, neutral, and evil. Thus, while they may adhere to their own standards of honor, their values and morality differ greatly from tribe to tribe.

Arms and Armor

Gypsies have a somewhat limited choice of weapons and armor compared to other rogues. No doubt this is partially responsible for their tendency to avoid direct confrontation in favor of stealth and trickery. Gypsies cannot wear any form of metal armor. Even the delicate and supple chainmail wrought by elf smiths is prohibited to them. In addition, they never make use of any form of shield. Gypsies can employ only one-handed melee weapons, although they are free to employ bows, crossbows, and other two-handed missile weapons.

Spells and Magical Items

The gypsies of Ravenloft have access to a fair selection of magical items and can cast a good many spells. They can also use any magical item normally available to members of the thief class. In addition, they have free access to all magical items that emulate divination spells, such as a crystal ball, even when those are intended for characters of another class.

Higher-level gypsies do not gain the ability to use priest and wizard scrolls as thieves do. However, those that have a divination purpose, like a scroll with a *detect magic* spell on it, are always usable by them.

As they advance in levels, gypsy characters can use a limited number of wizard spells. They do not keep spell books like normal wizards do, although they do go through similar steps to learn their spells. In addition, they need not choose their spells ahead of time, although any spell they wish to use has a casting time of three turns (thirty minutes). Only those spells that fall into the schools of lesser and greater divination are available to the gypsy. **Table 104: Gypsy Spell Progression** indicates the number of spells that a gypsy can cast per day.

Table 104: Gypsy Spell Progression

Gypsy	Wizard Spell			
Level	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1-3	1	-	-	-
4-6	2	-	-	-
7-9	2	1	-	-
10-12	3	2	-	-
13-15	3	2	1	-
16-18	3	2	2	-
19+	3	3	2	1

Gypsy Clans

All gypsy player characters are members of gypsy tribes. For one reason or another, however, they have left their tribe behind to explore and adventure for a time. This is not an uncommon action among the young men and women of Ravenloft's gypsy tribes.

During his travels, a young gypsy may well encounter tribes other than his own. Depending upon his alignment and the values of the other tribe, this may or may not present a problem. It is impossible for a gypsy to hide his alignment from another tribe without the use of magical spells.

If the adventurer encounters a tribe whose alignment exactly matches his own, he is welcomed as a friend. He is given whatever aid and comfort it is within the means of that tribe to provide. Should the tribe's alignment deviate only slightly from that of the character (lawful neutral and lawful good, for example), the adventurer is welcomed and treated as a guest. He receives no special consideration but is given food, a place to sleep, and the like. If the adventurer and the tribe do not

have similar alignments, he is turned away. Depending on his response to this treatment, violence may erupt. Nothing prohibits one tribe of gypsies from making war on another.

Knife Fighting

The traditional weapon of the gypsy is the knife or dagger. In fact, no other class (with the possible exception of the fighter) is as skillful in the use of these weapons as the gypsy. For that reason, a gypsy can specialize in the use of the knife just as if he were a fighter. This specialization requires the normal allocation of proficiency slots and applies to both melee combat and the throwing of knives as well.

This specialization is a limited form of the fighter's ability, however. While the character does receive the normal +1 attack bonus and +2 damage bonus, he does not gain any extra attacks with the knife.

Gypsy Lore

This ability is similar to that of the bard and the arcanist, who know a little bit about everything. Because of the traveling life of a gypsy, whether he is on his own or in the company of his clan, these characters accumulate a wealth of knowledge about the various lands of Ravenloft.

When a gypsy character is presented with an object, meets a person, explores a place, or is otherwise confronted with something about which he might have knowledge, the Dungeon Master should roll percentile dice. The chance that a character will know something about a given topic is 5% per level. Thus, a 12th-level gypsy has a 60% chance to know a little bit about a given domain lord or magical object.

The extent of the character's knowledge should be determined by the Dungeon Master, but should generally be brief. For example, when a gypsy character first encounters an unfamiliar plant, the Dungeon Master may decide to give the character a chance of recognizing it. If the roll succeeds, the gypsy might be told something like, "Those are bloodroses; I'd keep my distance."

Sinister Perceptions

Because the gypsies are not looked upon with favor by most of Ravenloft's common folk, they suffer a marked disadvantage in earning their trust. Whenever a gypsy is called upon to make an encounter reaction check (see the Dungeon Master Guide), his result is automatically shifted one place toward hostile. Thus, a gypsy never receives a result of "friendly" when dealing with a nongypsy. Note that this applies only when dealing with nongypsies. The rules presented earlier in this section can be used to adjudicate encounters between members of various gypsy tribes.

The Vistani

Non-Vistani gypsy tribes fall into a sort of cultural netherworld. Not only are they feared and often mistrusted by their human kindred, the ranks of the Vistani find them generally distasteful as well. In the eyes of Ravenloft's so-called "true gypsies," these people are at best considered cheap imitations and are often the target of ridicule and abuse. At worst, non-Vistani gypsies are frauds who can not be trusted and who wish to ferret out the secrets of the Mist walkers.

In game terms, this negative reaction is reflected in an adjustment to the character's Charisma-based attributes. When dealing with a Vistani, a gypsy character will find that his initial reaction and loyalty base adjustments are always penalties. Thus, it is as bad to have a high Charisma score as a low one when dealing with the Vistani.

Psionicists



Ability Requirement: Constitution 11+
Intelligence 12+
Wisdom 15+
Prime Requisite: Constitution, Wisdom
Races Allowed: Any

Psionicists are an optional player character class described in The Complete Psionics Handbook and Player's Option: Skills&Powers. The former version is the model upon which these rules are based, although those who use the latter in their campaigns should have no difficulty adapting the rules that follow.

In order to have psionicist characters in his game, a Dungeon Master must make use of the rules provided in either The Complete Psionics Handbook or Player's Option: Skills&Powers. These rules are not duplicated in this book. It is also worth noting that the rules presented in the latter book are almost identical to those found in the revised edition of the Dark Sun Campaign Setting. Because of this, one could make use of that product to allow the introduction of psionicist characters in his Ravenloft campaign.

This is not to say, however, that the powers of the mind function normally in Ravenloft. Just as the magic of wizards and priests is altered by the whims of the dark powers, so too are the rules governing psionics changed. All of the variations on the standard psionics powers are presented in Chapter Ten: Mazes of the Mind.

Ability Requirements

In order to qualify as a psionicist, a character must meet several ability score requirements. Because his body must be sound before he can begin to undertake the rigorous training of this class, his Constitution score must be no lower than 11. In addition, the determination and mental stamina required to master even the most basic of psionic disciplines requires that the character have an Intelligence score of at least 12 and a Wisdom score of no less than 15.

Wisdom and Constitution are the prime requisites for members of this class. A character with an exceptionally high score (16 or higher) in both of these areas is so sound in both mind and body that he receives a +10% bonus to all experience points awarded to him by the Dungeon Master.

Alignment

Psionicist player characters can be of any nonchaotic, nonevil alignment. Because of the need for structured thought and mental discipline, only characters who are lawful or neutral can attain the levels of mental control required to use psionic

powers.

Arms and Armor

Psionicists disdain the use of weapons, favoring the powers of the mind over those of the body in all cases. Because of this, the only weapons available to psionicists are short bows, hand crossbows, light crossbows, daggers, dirks, knives, clubs, hand axes, throwing axes, horseman's maces, horseman's picks, scimitars, spears, short swords, and war hammers. In domains where they are available, psionicists can employ handguns as well. A good rule of thumb in judging whether nonstandard arms can be used by psionicists is to assume that they can employ any small or medium weapon that weighs six pounds or less.

Psionicists also lack training in the use of armor and shields. To reflect this, they cannot make use of any form of metal armor and can use only small shields. Should a psionicist opt to don a metal helmet (as part of a disguise, for example), he is unable to use his powers due to the metal's disruptive effect on the energies of the brain. Of course, if the helmet has itself been imbued with psionic powers (or magical abilities that mimic psionic powers), the character's abilities function normally.

Spells and Magical Items

As psionicists are not wizards or priests, they have no access to the spells used by those masters of the supernatural and spiritual world. This is not to say, however, that they do not make use of magical items. Psionicists can use magical versions of any weapon that they normally have access to as well as those magic items not restricted to the use of a specific class, like a ring of regeneration or potion of healing. In addition, a psionicist can use magical items whose effects are deemed by the Dungeon Master to duplicate those obtained through the use of one of his disciplines. For example, a psionicist who is a master of clairsentience could employ a *crystal ball*.

Hit Dice

Psionicists begin play with 6 hit points. When they advance in level, a six-sided die is used to determine the number of hit points that they gain. The roll of this die can be modified by an exceptionally high or low Constitution score. This process continues until the character attains 10th level. At that point, the character gains 2 hit points with every new level and no longer receives bonus hit points for a high Constitution score.

Attack Rolls

Although each of the character groups begins with a THAC0 of 20, a psionicist's THAC0 follows that of the rogue's group in that it improves by one point for every two experience levels. So, when a psionicist attains 3rd level, his THAC0 becomes 19. Once he reaches the 5th level, his THAC0 becomes 18, and so on.

Saving Throws

All psionicist characters use **Table 105** to determine their resistance to special attacks. As a rule, characters of this type are more resistant to those attacks that require willpower and determination but tend to be somewhat vulnerable to those that require combat ability to escape.

Table 105: Psionicist Saving Throws

Character Level	Paralyzation, Poison, or Death Magic	Rod, Staff, or Wand	Petrification or Polymorph*	Breath Weapon**	Spell***
1-4	13	15	10	16	15
5-8	12	13	9	15	14
11-12	11	11	8	13	12
13-16	10	9	7	12	11
17-20	9	7	6	11	9
21+	8	5	5	9	7

* Excluding polymorph wand attacks.
** Excluding those that cause petrificafion or polymorph.
*** Excluding thosefor which another saving throw type is specified, such as death magic, petrification, polymorph, etc.

Fear, Horror and Madness

The psionicist character is a master of the mind. He devotes most of his time to perfecting the mental disciplines that give him his unmatched mental abilities. Because of this, these characters are very resistant to the effects of madness checks. Conversely, however, the terrors and horrors of the world are often overwhelming to them. This is not to say that psionicists are in any way cowardly, only that they are sometimes unprepared for the physical horrors that often lurk in the Mists.

Table 106: Psionicist Fear, Horror and Madness Checks

Character Level	Fear Check	Horror Check	Madness Check
1-2	15	17	16
3-4	14	16	15
5-6	13	15	14
7-8	12	14	13
9-10	11	13	12
11-12	10	12	11
13-14	7	11	10
15-16	5	9	9
17-18	3	7	8
19-20	3	5	6

Madness

Ravenloft is a land of horrors far beyond the ken of most folk. Even the heroes and adventurers who travel these misty realms are often subjected to sights, sounds, and experiences that threaten to destroy their very sanity. Psionicist characters, however, are especially resistant to such assaults.

Teetering on the Brink: When a psionicist character fails a madness check, his mind automatically erects a series of defensive mental blocks. These protect the character from the normal effects of a failed madness check but shut down all of his psionic powers for twenty-four hours.

During this time, the psionicist is teetering on the brink of madness. His mind is feverishly trying to cope with whatever it was that caused his madness check in the first place. Such characters are generally nervous and shaken, although no game effects (other than the loss of psionic powers) are associated with such trauma.

At the end of that time, the character's mind is fully restored, and his powers return. The number of PSPs (see "Psionic

Strength Points") that he has is the same as it was when he failed his madness check. Apart from this one-day fugue, such a character suffers no ill effects from the failed madness check.

If the character fails a second madness check while his mind is in this state, these protective barriers collapse. Such a catastrophe subjects the character to the normal results of a failed madness check. In essence, this special ability allows the psionicist to shake off the effects of any one failed madness check in a twenty-four-hour period. A second such failure, however, is just as debilitating to the psionicist as it would be for a character of any class; plus, he still cannot use his psionic abilities.

Stepping Back from the Brink: In addition to having the best chance of surviving a madness check unharmed, psionicists are also less injured by a failed check. In all cases, the time required to treat a psionicist who has been driven mad is halved. Thus, any program of treatment that would normally allow the character a weekly check for improvement gives the psionicist a check after four days have passed and then again once the full week has passed.

Level Advancement

As a psionicist character accumulates experience points, he advances in level. Table 107 indicates the number of points required to attain each level. In addition, the character's accumulated Hit Dice totals are also indicated.

Table 107: Psionicist Experience Levels

Character Level	Experience Points	Hit Dice
1	0	1d6*
2	2200	2d6
3	4400	3d6
4	88000	4d6
5	16500	5d6
6	30000	6d6
7	5000	7d6
8	100000	8d6
9	200000	9d6
10	400000	9d6+2
11	600000	9d6+4
12	800000	9d6+6
13	1000000	9d6+8
14	1200000	9d6+10
15	1500000	9d6+12
16	1800000	9d6+14
17	2100000	9d6+16
18	2400000	9d6+18
19	2700000	9d6+20
20	3000000	9d6+22

* Player Characters begin with 6 hit points plus Constitution adjustments

Followers and Holdings

In most campaigns, a high-level psionicist attracts a large number of followers who wish to study his methods and learn from his teachings. This simply does not happen in Ravenloft. After the psionicist reaches 9th level, a Dungeon Master

might want to introduce an apprentice or student nonplayer character, but this should be done strictly for roleplaying purposes.

Just as they can normally attract followers, so too are high-level psionicists entitled to build special sanctuaries once they attain the 9th level of experience. In Ravenloft, however, they do so at their own peril. As is so often the case, anyone who would dare to establish such a fastness does little more than advertise his presence and draw the attention of the domain lord.

Starting Wealth

A psionicist character begins play with 3d4xl0 gold pieces. These funds can be used to purchase equipment, cached for later use, or otherwise disposed of as the player sees fit.

Gaining Disciplines and Powers

As psionicist characters advance in level, they gradually accumulate new powers. This represents the training of their minds and the natural increases in ability that come with experience. Table 108 indicates the number of disciplines available to a psionicist of a given level, as well as the total number of sciences and devotions that he can have within them. Lastly, it lists the number of psionic defense modes available to the character through the use of his contact proficiency (see The Complete Psionics Handbook for explanations on psionic proficiencies).

Table 108: Psionicist Disciplines, Powers, and Modes

XP Level	Total Disciplines	Total Sciences	Total Devotions	Defense Modes
1	1	1	3	1
2	2	1	5	1
3	2	2	7	2
4	2	2	9	2
5	2	3	10	3
6	3	3	11	3
7	3	4	12	4
8	3	4	13	4
9	3	5	14	5
10	4	5	15	5
11	4	6	16	5
12	4	6	17	5
13	4	7	18	5
14	5	7	19	5
15	5	8	20	5
16	5	8	21	5
17	5	9	22	5
18	6	9	23	5
19	6	10	24	5
20	6	10	25	5

Psionic Disciplines

All of the psionic powers in the AD&D game are divided into general groups called disciplines. Each of these is further subdivided into devotions (or minor powers) and sciences (or major powers).

When a character is first created, the player must select the single discipline that the character is skilled in. This is known as his primary discipline, and it marks the way in which his character's mental powers and abilities progress throughout his adventuring career. It also marks the way in which his fellow adventurers perceive him. For example, a character whose primary discipline is telepathy is always considered a telepath, no matter how many psychoportive powers he might master later in his career.

A player creating a new psionicist can freely select the discipline that his character begins play with. In Ravenloft, as in AD&D, there are six disciplines, each of which is briefly described below.

Clairsentience: Those who have mastered this discipline perceive things that those around them are unable to. Some of the sciences and devotions that fall under this heading allow characters to see things that are hidden from them, read the past events associated with an object, or even learn of events that have not yet transpired.

Psychokinesis: Psychokinetic characters have the ability to manipulate the world around them through sheer exertion of will. Masters of this discipline can often raise or lower the temperature of an object, move heavy weights with their minds, and even take flight.

Psychometabolism: Those who have gained the powers of psychometabolism can exert great control over the functions of their own bodies as well as those of others. A person so trained might be able to heal wounds, cure diseases, drain life energy, accelerate aging, and induce sleep.

Psychoportation: A psychoportive character can instantly transport himself or others across great distances. Indeed, by warping the very fabric of time and space such a character can visit alternate universes, walk the planes of existence, or even travel in time.

Telepathy: When the average citizen thinks of a psionicist (which, admittedly, he does not often have cause to do), he thinks of those who have mastered the discipline of telepathy. Such characters can read the thoughts of others, sweep away memories of past events, or even cause people to doubt their senses.

Metapsionics: Metapsionics are powers that augment or otherwise combine with other psionic abilities. Because this limits their use somewhat, many people consider them inferior to the other disciplines. In actuality, though, a resourceful character can do wondrous things with metapsionics.

Psionic Sciences

The most potent abilities within any given discipline are called sciences. When a psionicist begins play, he will have mastered only a single science within his chosen discipline.

A player creating a new character can freely select his first devotion. Upon attaining higher levels, when **Table 108** indicates that the character has mastered a new discipline, he can again select the one that becomes available to him. Of course, the Dungeon Master is free to veto any choice or to require the selection of a specific science if the needs of the campaign so mandate.

Psionic Devotions

In addition to the powerful sciences that comprise each discipline, a trained psionicist uses the powers of his mind to accomplish a number of lesser abilities. These are called devotions, and even a low-level psionicist will have mastered many of them.

Defense Modes

One of the first things that a psionicist learns in his training is how to defend himself from mental attack by other psionicists or psionic creatures. A newly created character has mastered only a single defense mode. This can be chosen by the player (or assigned by the Dungeon Master) from the following list: intellect fortress, mental barrier, mind blank, thought shield, and tower of iron will.

Restrictions

The powers of the mind, great though they may be, are not beyond measure nor without limitations. A player must obey certain restrictions when selecting the disciplines, devotions, and sciences available to his character.

Selecting New Powers

When a character increases in level he always gains the ability to use new psionic devotions. He can also acquire new sciences and, occasionally, master a new discipline.

When this happens, all new abilities are selected at once. Normally, this choice is utterly up to the player, although the Dungeon Master can veto selections that do not fit well in the campaign. As long as the player obeys the limitations described below, he can select sciences and devotions from any discipline, even one that he has only just acquired.

Minimum Number of Devotions: Within any single discipline, a character must always have at least twice as many devotions as he does sciences. For example, a psionicist who has mastered the telepathy discipline cannot acquire a third science in that field until he has learned at least six devotions.

For starting characters, who have only a single discipline, this is not a problem. As the character advances in level, however, the player and Dungeon Master should double check all new selections to ensure that this tenet is not violated.

Primary Disciplines: When selecting new sciences and devotions, a player must always make certain that he does not exceed the number that his character has mastered in his primary discipline. Again, for starting characters this is not a problem. Only higher-level psionicists are in danger of violating this rule. For example, consider a psionicist who has two sciences and five devotions in his primary discipline. Such a character can have no more than one science and four devotions in any other discipline.

Psionic Strength Points

In Ravenloft, as in all AD&D campaign worlds, psionicist characters power their special abilities via psionic strength points (or PSPs). However, the fluctuations of the Mists and all pervasive essence of the land has a dampening effect on psionics in general. Thus, while PSPs are initially acquired at the same level that they are in other realms, they are regained more slowly after use.

Starting PSP Scores

The number of psionic strength points that a character begins play with is determined using the following steps:

Base PSPs: A psionicist begins play with a base number of PSPs equal to 20 plus 2 points for every point of Wisdom over 15. Thus, someone with a 17 Wisdom score has a base of 24 PSPs.

Additional PSPs: For every point over 15 in the character's Intelligence and Constitution score, another point is added to the base value. Thus, if a character had scores of 17 for his Wisdom, Intelligence, and Constitution, he begins play with (24+2+2) 28 psionic strength points.

Gaining PSPs

As a psionicist increases in level, he can use his powers more freely. This is reflected by an increase in the number of PSPs available to the character.

Whenever a psionicist increases in level, he receives a minimum of 10 additional psionic strength points. To this base, 1 point is added for every point of Wisdom that the character has over 15. Thus, a character with a Wisdom score of 17 receives an additional +2 points for a total of 12.

Recovering PSPs

The exact rate at which expended PSPs are regained is based upon the location of the character. For some reason, the psionic dampening effect of Ravenloft is greatest in the Core and weakest in the Pocket domains.

Exactly why this is, none can say for certain, but many speculate that a living essence exists in the land that interferes with the use of mental powers. If this is the case, then the argument by some that the land is a vital, living thing seems a likely assertion. Still, for the time being, such mysteries must remain unexplained and mankind must simply live with the effects of the unknown.

Closed Domains

The actions of a domain's lord can have a detrimental effect upon the rate at which expended points are recovered. In any domain that has had its borders closed, the rate of PSP recovery is halved for any psionicist trapped there. Thus, a telepath caught in Borca when Gabrielle Aderre creates her ring of terror would regain only one point every two hours.

Traveling the Mists

Any psionicist who travels within the swirling clouds that embrace Ravenloft discovers that they do not appear to recover expended PSPs at all. It has been speculated that this is not actually the case. Rather, some scholars say, the rate of recovery is slowed to the point where it appears to have stopped. While this sort of distinction may warm the hearts of psionic scholars who are safe at home, those who are trapped in the Mists and running low on PSPs take little comfort in it.

Table 109: Regaining PSPs in Ravenloft

Character's Current Location	Points Recovered per Hour: Hard Exertion	Walking/ Riding	Sitting/ Reading	Sleep/ Meditation
Any Core domain	none	1 per 4 hours	1 per 2 hours	1 per hour
Any Cluster domain	none	1 per 2 hours	1 per hour	2 per hour
Any Island of Terror	none	1 per hour	2 per hour	4 per hour
Any Pocket domain	none	2 per hour	4 per hour	8 per hour

Willpower

The powerful mind of a psionicist makes him especially resistant to certain forms of magical attack. Whenever one of these characters is the target of a spell from the enchantment/charm school, he receives a +2 bonus to his saving throw. This adjustment is in addition to any received for an exceptional Wisdom score or other consideration.

Multi- and Dual-Class Characters

All of the standard rules for multi-class or dual-class characters apply to campaigns based in the Demiplane of Dread. The following is both a summary of those guidelines and a note on the additional conditions that apply to them in Ravenloft.

Multi-Class Characters

Table 110: Allowable Multi-Class Combinations lists the standard demihuman races available in a Ravenloft campaign and their allowable class combinations. It should be noted that half-Vistani characters are considered so close to human that they must use the rules for dual-class characters, presented later in this chapter.

Table 110: Allowable Multi-Class Combinations

Dwarf	**Halfling**
Fighter/Thief	Fighter/Thief
Fighter/Cleric	
	Half-Elf
Elf	Fighter/Cleric
Fighter/Mage	Fighter/Thief
Fighter/Thief	Fighter/Gypsy
Mage/Thief	Fighter/Mage
	Cleric/Ranger
Gnome	Cleric/Mage
Fighter/Cleric	Thief/Mage
Fighter/Illusionist	Thief/Gypsy
Fighter/Thief	Fighter/Mage/Cleric
Cleric/Illusionist	Fighter/Mage/Thief
Cleric/Thief	
Illusionist/Thief	

Standard Considerations

The following is a summary of rules presented in the Players Handbook for the use of multi-class characters. They apply in Ravenloft campaigns just as they would in any other AD&D game and are presented here for ease of reference.

- Experience points earned by a multi-class character must be evenly divided between all of his chosen classes.

- Except as indicated on **Table 110**, multi-class characters cannot be specialist mages or priests of a specific mythos. Rare exceptions can be made by the Dungeon Master.

- Multi-class characters always use the most favorable attack roll or saving throw allowed to their various classes. The same is true for fear, horror, and madness checks.

- A character's hit points are the average of his Hit Dice rolls. When the character is first created, the player rolls hit points for each class, totals them up, then divides the total by the number of dice rolled (round down). Constitution adjustments, if

any, are applied after the averaging is done. Once the character advances a level in one of his classes, the player rolls the appropriate Hit Die and divides the result by the number of classes the character has (round fractions down, but a Hit Die can never be less than one hit point). A character's Constitution bonus is split between his classes. When the character advances in one class, he receives half (or one-third) of the Constitution bonus. After the character's other class (or classes) advances a level, then the rest (or another one-third) of the Constitution bonus is applied.

Weapons and Armor

The weapons and armor available to a character depends upon his choice of classes.

- **Warriors**: A multi-class warrior can use all of his abilities unless otherwise prohibited. These characters are the standard by which others are judged.

- **Priests**: A priest is subject to the full restrictions of that class and cannot, therefore, use edged weapons.

- **Wizards**: A wizard character can freely combine his spellcasting abilities with the weapon choices of his other classes. His choice of armor, however, is restricted. An elf can cast spells while in elven chain, but all other races must abide by the armor restrictions stated for wizard characters.

- **Thieves**: Although a multi-class thief is free to use any weapon he wishes, his choice of armor can affect his thieving abilities. A thief in armor not normally allowed to that class is unable to employ any of his skills save for opening locks and hearing noise. When using those abilities, he must remove his gauntlets or helmet.

Dual-Class Characters

Only humans and half-Vistani can be dual-class characters. The normal requirements are listed below.

- A character must have scores of 15 or better in the prime requisites of his original class and 17 or better in those of his second class.

- A character must attain at least 2nd level in his original class before switching to a new profession.

- Once a class is abandoned, the character cannot return to it at a later time.

- A character retains all of his hit points and Hit Dice totals when he converts to his new class but must forego all of the other benefits of his previous class until he attains a higher level in his second class than he held in his first. If he decides to use any of his old abilities (including attack and saving throw numbers, weapons or armor that are now prohibited, and any other abilities of the old class that are not included in the new class), he earns no experience for that encounter and receives only half experience for the whole adventure.

- A dual-class character must obey the weapon and armor restrictions of whichever class he is currently acting as. Thus, if a fighter/mage wants to throw a spell, he cannot be wearing heavy armor.

Allowable Combinations

In most AD&D games, it is possible for a character to combine any two classes when becoming dual-class. On the Demiplane of Dread, however, one notable exception exists in the form of the avenger class. Avengers are determined and resolute. They have no interest in anything other than revenge for the wrong that has made them what they are. As such, an

avenger character cannot become dual-class. In addition, no character can become a dual-class avenger. Thus, a hero who is not created as an avenger will not become an avenger, and one who begins as an avenger will remain one forever.

Imported Characters

The Demiplane of Dread is an isolated realm. On all sides it is surrounded by the churning vapors men call only the Mists. Into these rolling clouds a man may pass, but not with any assurance that he will emerge where he wishes. Besides the Mists, there appear to be only two other regions that men can freely move into from Ravenloft. These are the Border Ethereal and the fringes of the Demiplane of Shadow. As with the Mists, however, these are not places to be visited lightly.

While escape from the Demiplane is difficult or impossible, entry to the Land of the Mists is somewhat easier. Because of this, it is not uncommon for explorers from other lands to make their way into the dark domains of Ravenloft. With that in mind, the following information should be used to adjust characters who come from other AD&D campaigns into one set in Ravenloft.

Paladins

Paladins are warriors who strive for law and order, truth and justice. Their nature is almost antithetical to the corrupting influence of the land and the menace that lurks in Ravenloft. This creates something of a juxtaposition in the minds of these heroic warriors. In what place can they better serve the cause of good than in a land that appears to be absolute evil? By the same token, however, is it not almost suicidal for such an individual to remain in so corrupt a place? After all, how much good can a paladin do if he is dead? Each player will have to decide how his hero comes to grips with these tenets for himself.

Detect Evil: A normal paladin can detect evil at a distance of up to sixty feet. Of course, no such ability works in Ravenloft. When this power is used on the Demiplane of Dread, the target is entitled to a saving throw vs. spell. Success indicates that the paladin's power fails to work at all. Even if the target fails his saving throw, however, the paladin senses only whether the creature is "chaotic" or "no chaotic." The paladin is aware that something is amiss with this ability the moment he uses it.

Diseases: By their very nature, paladins are immune to disease. While this remains true in Ravenloft, it is important to note that they are vulnerable to magical diseases, like lycanthropy and the various viruses described in the Ravenloft Monstrous Compendium volumes. Similarly, diseases caused by magical spells are fully effective against paladins. However, a paladin's +2 bonus to all saving throws still applies.

The same restriction applies to the paladin's ability to cure disease. Only those maladies that are of natural origin can be cured by the paladin's holy abilities.

Protection From Evil: The natural aura of protection that surrounds a paladin is less effective on the Demiplane of Dread. Its only effect is to impose a -1 penalty on the attack rolls of all evil creatures within its area of operation.

In addition, however, this aura is readily visible to those of evil alignment. While most will only sense that something about the paladin is distasteful, those who have an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 14 or higher will see the aura and its source for what they are.

Domain Lords: When a paladin enters a domain, the master of that realm is instantly aware of the fact. He will sense the approximate location of the paladin at all times, being able to determine things like "a paladin is in the village" or "a paladin is on the road between the castle and the shrine."

While the ability of the domain lord to sense the presence of the paladin is disturbing enough, things only get worse if the knight draws a holy sword. The instant that such a blade is brought into play, the domain lord knows where the paladin is within one hundred yards. Of course, this rule applies for any manner of holy weapon, not just swords.

Saving Throws and Turning Undead: The other abilities of paladins, especially their bonuses to saving throws and ability to turn undead, remain effective in Ravenloft. Of course, they suffer the same reduction to their ability to turn undead that all other characters who have this power do.

Druids

Druids are priests of nature who devote themselves to the worship of life and the physical world. They are the protectors of forests, guardians of the animal kingdom, and keepers of the balance.

Being an unnatural world, the Demiplane is not home to many of these folk. This is not to say that such priests are not encountered among the Mists. Those who are trapped in Ravenloft, however, are almost exclusively natives of another world.

When a druid comes into Ravenloft, he will find that several of his natural powers are slightly twisted by the aberrant laws of that dark place. Only the powers that have been altered are described below. Refer to the Player's Handbook for a full listing of druid abilities.

Spell Use: While in Ravenloft, a druid's ability to cast spells remains the same. The effects of those spells, of course, are warped according to the normal rules for magic use presented elsewhere in this book.

Saving Throws: Druids normally receive a +2 bonus to any saving throw that they make to resist the effects of a lightning- or fire-based attack. This bonus functions normally unless the attack is made by the lord of a domain. So powerful are such creatures and so unique is their place in Ravenloft that the normal defenses of the druid falter in their presence.

Identify Plants and Animals: This power functions normally provided that the druid is in a domain that was drawn from his homeworld. If the character is in a realm that is similar to his own world, this ability functions with only an 80% reliability. A druid from the Forgotten Realms setting who is exploring Tovag (which is from the Greyhawk setting) is in a similar world. If the character is in a dissimilar realm, this ability functions only 50% of the time. A character from the Forgotten Realms setting who finds himself trapped in Kalidnay (which is from the Dark Sun setting) would be exploring a dissimilar realm. A druid from any normal realm who is exploring a strange and twisted region like the Nightmare Lands or Bluetspur would also be in a dissimilar realm. The exact determination of a realm's status for this ability is, of course, up to the Dungeon Master.

Pass Without Trace: The ability of a druid to make his way through overgrown areas, underbrush, and the like functions normally in Ravenloft with but one exception. At no time can this power be used to bypass the borders of a closed domain.

The Great Druid: No druid church has been established in Ravenloft, and thus no hierarchy exists. Because of this, Ravenloft has no Great Druid. While a druid can advance to 15th level (or beyond), theoretically becoming the Great Druid, no one in Ravenloft recognizes that post. Such a character might claim this title, but receives no followers or additional spellcasting abilities for the illegitimate title.

16th-Level Hierophant: A druid who advances to 16th level gains the normal abilities associated with that rank. With one exception, these all function as described in the Player's Handbook. The druid's resistance to poisons does not affect those toxins associated with a domain lord or the Land of Ravenloft itself. Thus, the food and water of Borca would remain deadly to the druid should the lord of that domain opt to seal the borders.

Higher Level Hierophants: At 17th or higher levels, a druid normally gains the ability to enter and survive in the various elemental planes. The same is true of those traveling in Ravenloft. Unfortunately, the dark powers do not allow these abilities to function on the Demiplane of Dread. Should the druid somehow leave the Land of the Mists, however, the powers will manifest themselves instantly.

Thus, if a druid were to be hurled out of the Mists and into the Elemental Plane of Fire (an unlikely event, to be sure), he would not be harmed by the experience. As soon as he left Ravenloft, his immunity to the hazards of that blazing realm would become effective.

Bards

Bards are tellers of tales, singers of songs, and entertainers extraordinaire. In other realms, they come in many varieties. Such happy, bright, and entertaining characters do not generally appear on the Demiplane of Dread. The closest thing to the bard in Ravenloft is the gypsy who travels about with news from other places or tells stories to entertain his patrons. For all their similarities, gypsies live a hard life and are generally more grim and somber. Their stories and songs are often tragic, occasionally prophetic, and generally more solemn than those of the bard.

Only in the domain of Kartakass are true bards (as described in the Player's Handbook) found. In that land an entire culture has grown around singing and music. Still, all is not as it seems in this wooded realm. While many of the populace have the singing or musical instrument proficiencies, the only true bards in this realm are the Meistersingers. Also, they are all wolfweres, not suitable for use as player characters.

Still, bards from other lands do occasionally make their way into the Demiplane of Dread. When that happens, the following changes must be made in the use of their special abilities.

Spell Use: While a bard's spellcasting powers are not changed by his passage through the Mists, it must be kept in mind that magic itself works differently on the Demiplane of Dread. Bards are fully subject to the making of powers checks for using evil spells and similar adjustments.

Bard Abilities: Bards share many of the thief's abilities, including the knack for working out the meaning of a document in a language that he cannot read or write. In Ravenloft, this ability applies only to works that originated in the bard's home land or that were written in a language used there.

Thus, a bard from the Greyhawk campaign setting could use this ability to decipher things brought into Ravenloft from Oerth. By the same token, however, he could attempt to master things in the language of Necropolis, for it was once a part of that world.

Bardic Song: The ability of a bard to modify the reaction of a crowd with a cheerful tune or an entertaining story is generally unaffected by the powers of the land. Because of the generally xenophobic nature of people in Ravenloft, however, the saving throw allowed for the audience is made with a +2 bonus.

Bardic Voice: The inspiring songs and tales of a bard are just as effective in Ravenloft as they are elsewhere. In addition to the character's normal ability to improve attack rolls, saving throws, or morale, an inspiring song can be used to give the bard's allies a +2 bonus on any fear checks that they must make.

Bardic Lore: The ability of a bard to "know a little bit of everything" is greatly reduced in Ravenloft. Because the Demiplane of Dread is a place unlike any a bard is likely to have explored before, this ability is subject to the same restrictions that apply to the read languages ability. That is, the person, place, or thing being considered must have originated in or have some important tie to the character's homeland.

Players can attempt to use this power to determine whether or not their characters are in Ravenloft. The Dungeon Master should allow the bard a normal chance to deduce that his character is on the Demiplane of Dread, since word of its existence has reached the Prime Material Plane. Of course, the information that the bard has about the Land of the Mists is likely to be confusing and jumbled, so little actual value will come of the deduction.

Character Alignments

Characters in the Ravenloft setting are rated using the same alignment categories that govern all AD&D campaigns. When a player creates a character, he must decide upon its exact alignment. As a rule, no Ravenloft character can select an evil alignment or an alignment that is not either lawful or good in some aspect. The only exception to this are anchorites and similar characters who are of true neutral alignment.

The Nine Alignments

The following is a brief description of the nine alignments found in the AD&D game. When a player creates his character, he must select one of them. Certain alignments are not recommended for use by player characters.

Chaotic Good

Characters of this alignment are determined to see good prevail over evil at any cost. In their quest for ultimate good, they freely ignore laws that they feel are unjust or overly restrictive. Many vigilantes and freedom fighters fall into this category. Chaotic good characters have no use for bullies, tyrants, or others who crush the rights of the individual.

Lawful Good

Like all lawful characters, those of good alignment favor a structured society in which the good of the majority is placed above all other things. They recognize that justice and virtue are held in place only by laws and those who enforce them. A lawful good character always tries to work within the law to bring about change. An honest constable or benevolent king is a fine example of a lawful good character.

Neutral Good

Neutral good characters are just and noble, but generally keep to themselves and try to avoid becoming entangled in the affairs of others. They see that a balance between laws and freedom is important, but care must be taken to ensure that an ultimate good comes out of any compromise. The classic Robin Hood is a fine example of a neutral good character.

Lawful Newtral

Characters of this alignment are rigid and structured in their thinking. They see the importance of order and law as being greater than that of good or evil. In their eyes, society will prosper so long as people obey the rules and a balance is struck between good and evil. Most unfeeling bureaucrats fall into this category.

True Neutral

Characters of this alignment believe that all things must be in perfect balance. There must be good and evil, law and chaos. Those who worship nature, like druids, or who seek to attain a state of universal enlightenment fall into this category.

Chaotic Neutral

Most people would consider those who fall into this category to be dangerous eccentrics. They see no good or evil in the universe and have no desire to promote the interests of law and order. Characters of this alignment are subject to swift changes of fancy and are generally difficult to deal with. It is recommended that players not be allowed to run chaotic neutral characters.

Neutral Evil

These characters favor personal gain above all else. They work with others when the need to do so arises but see no value to be had in long-term commitments or friendships. Their loyalty is typically commanded by wealth or power and can be bought by the highest bidder. It is recommended that players not be allowed to run neutral evil characters.

Lawful Evil

Lawful evil characters generally see that society needs laws to exist. They see virtue in order and accountability. As lawful characters, they keep their word and can be counted on to keep to the letter of any agreement they make, if not its spirit. They also try to use the laws to their benefit in any way possible. The elite soldiers of an oppressive dictator generally fall into this category. It is recommended that players not be allowed to run lawful evil characters.

Chaotic Evil

A chaotic evil person cares for nothing but raw power, personal wealth, and self-gratification. A chaotic evil person breaks oaths, betrays his friends, and does anything else that seems to be in his best interests at the moment. Groups of chaotic evil individuals are held together only by the force of their leader's Charisma or raw power. This alignment is not recommended for player characters.

Changing Alignment

All of the normal rules for voluntary and involuntary alignment changes apply to Ravenloft campaigns. When a character is making a voluntary change in alignment, two types of situations are possible. If the change is for the good of the game, then the Dungeon Master should try to accommodate it. If the change is not for the good of the game, then the experience point cost to gain the next level is doubled for that character.

When a character makes an involuntary change of alignment, the doubled experience point penalty does not apply. Instead, the character must make an immediate madness check. Failure at this check has the normal results as described in Chapter Six. In addition to the madness check, the character cannot earn any experience points until his former alignment is regained. If the player decides to keep the character's changed alignment, then the change is considered a voluntary alignment change from that point on.

Character Proficiencies

At this point, a character's natural talents have been defined, and we have a solid picture of his race and chosen profession. With the selection of his proficiencies, the character will be rounded out and made ready for use in the RAVENLOFT campaign.

Weapon Proficiencies

For the most part, a Ravenloft hero selects and makes use of his weapon proficiencies in exactly the same way that any AD& character does. Because of the unusual nature of the Demiplane of Dread, some modifications must be made.

Proficiency Slots

The number of proficiency slots that a character begins with is based upon his starting class, as is the rate at which he acquires new slots. A character attempting to use a weapon that he is not proficient with suffers a penalty to his attack rolls. Lesser penalties are given when a character attempts to use a weapon that is related to the one that he is proficient with. For example, if a fighter is proficient in the use of a long sword and only had a broad sword or bastard sword at his disposal, then he would only suffer a -1 penalty instead of a -2 penalty. Decisions about which weapons are related should be left to the Dungeon Master.

Table 111: Weapon Proficiency Slots lists the number of slots, the rate of slot acquisition, the related weapon penalty, and the nonproficiency penalty for each of the various character classes.

Table 111: Weapon Proficiency Slots

Character Class	Initial Slots	Additional Levels	Related Weapons	Nonprof. Weapons
Warrior	4	3	-1	-2
Wizard	1	6	-3	-5
Priest	2	4	-2	-3
Rogue	2	4	-2	-3
Psionicist	2	5	-2	-4

Multiple Attacks

Warriors, including rangers and avengers, share this ability with their kin in other AD&D campaigns. For more information, see the "Warrior" section in Appendix Three: Character Classes.

Weapon Specialization

This deadly ability is generally reserved for the ranks of the fighter class. In Ravenloft, however, the obsession that drives members of the avenger class allows them to specialize in the use of weapons as well.

To obtain a specialization, the character must devote two slots: one to become proficient with the weapon, the second to specialize in it. Any bow requires a total of three slots to specialize (one for proficiency, two for specialization).

Once a character specializes with a melee weapon, he gains a +1 bonus to his attack rolls with that weapon and gains a +2 bonus to damage rolls. Any Strength or magic bonuses that a character has are added to this bonus. Bow and crossbow specialists acquire the range category of point blank. For bows, point blank range is from six to thirty feet. Crossbows have a point blank range of six to sixty feet. At point blank range, the character has a +2 bonus to his attack rolls, although no additional damage is caused (aside from Strength and magical bonuses). If a character has an arrow nocked and drawn or a crossbow bolt loaded and cocked, then he can fire at the beginning of the round before anyone rolls for initiative.

Characters who specialize gain extra attacks earlier than those who do not specialize. These extra attacks are listed on **Table 112: Specialist Attacks Per Round**.

Table 112: Specialist Attacks Per Round

Fighter Level	Other Melee Weapon	Light X-bow	Heavy X-bow	Thrown Dagger	Thrown Dart	(Nonbows/) Missles	
1-6	3/2	1/1	1/2	3/1		4/1	3/2
7-12	2/1	3/2	1/1	4/1		5/1	2/1
13+	5/2	2/1	3/2	5/1		6/1	5/2

Natural Weapons

The typical AD&D character inflicts 1d2 points of damage from an unarmed attack. As characters explore the Demiplane of Dread, however, they are sometimes cursed with minor transformations that may give them fangs, claws, or other natural weapons.

A character with natural weapons is always proficient in their use, so none of the character's precious proficiency slots need to be allocated to them. Characters who can make use of the weapon specialization rules, however, can opt to allocate additional slots (the first is free) to the use of these weapons, earning the normal advantages associated with such training.

Cultural Levels

Not all of the weapons listed in the AD&D rules are available throughout Ravenloft. A character can begin play proficient only in those weapons that would have been available to him while he was growing up. That is, only those that might be found in his native domain.

Ordinarily, this will not present much of a problem. After all, a sword is a sword. It matters little if it is made of bronze or iron or steel. Firearms, however, are another matter. These are found only in a few of the scattered domains of Ravenloft.

Guidelines on the weapons available in various cultural levels can be found in Chapter One.

Nonweapon Profiences

In the AD&D game system, nonweapon proficiencies are simply skills and talents that a character has acquired over his life. The exact number of nonweapon proficiencies that a Ravenloft character begins play with, and the rate at which new ones are acquired, can be found on **Table 113: Nonweapon Proficiency Slots**.

Table 113: Nonweapon Proficiency Slots

Character Class	Initial Slots	Additional Levels
Warrior	3	3
Wizard	4	3
Priest	4	3
Rogue	3	4
Psionicist	3	3

Filling Slots

Players use their slots to purchase proficiencies in exactly the same fashion that they do in the core AD&D game. There are a few differences, however, in the way in which proficiencies are grouped. All proficiencies are grouped into one of four categories. If a skill is not listed in the common group, the racial group, or the class group of a character, then the character can purchase the skill by spending an extra slot on it.

Common Profiences

This group of proficiencies is open to all characters. The skills that fall under this heading are found throughout Ravenloft.

Uncommon Profiences

Although many of these skills are common in other places, they are rare in Ravenloft. Because of this, no character has ready access to this group. Thus, an additional slot has been allocated beyond those indicated on the original table in the Player's Handbook.

Racial Groups

Many of the skills not included in the common group have been assembled according to the races that they are most commonly associated with. Dwarf characters, for example, can acquire skills like mining.

Class Groups

In addition to their racial groups, all characters have free access to the proficiencies most associated with their character class. Multi- and dual-class characters have access to all of the groups open to any of their character classes.

Special Considerations

The folk of Ravenloft do not travel as often as those in, say, Toril. As such, many proficiencies suffer a reduction in their chance of success when used outside of the character's native domain. These penalties are noted in **Table 114: Nonweapon Proficiencies**.

Table 114: Nonweapon Proficiencies

Common	Slots	Abl.	Mod
Agriculture[2]	1	Int	0

Animal Handling[2]	1	Wis	-1
Animal Training	1	Wis	0
Artistic Ability	1	Wis	0
Blacksmithing	1	Str	0
Brewing	1	Int	0
Carpentry	1	Str	0
Cobbling	1	Dex	0
Cooking[4]	1	Int	0
Dancing[2]	1	Dex	0
Direction Sense[3]	1	Wis	+1
Etiquette[3]	1	Cha	0
Fire Building	1	Wis	-1
Fishing	1	Wis	-1
Heraldry[3]	1	Int	0
Languages, Modern	1	Int	0
Leatherworking	1	Int	0
Mining	2	Wis	-3
Musical Instrument	1	Dex	-1
Navigation[3]	1	Int	-2
Pottery	1	Dex	-2
Riding, Land-based	1	Wis	+3
Rope Use	1	Dex	0
Seamanship	1	Dex	+1
Seamstress/Tailor	1	Dex	-1
Singing	1	Cha	0
Stonemasonry	1	Str	-2
Swimming	1	Str	0
Weather Sense[3]	1	Wis	-1
Weaving	1	Int	-1
Uncommon			
Charioteering	2	Dex	+2
Disguise	2	Cha	-1
Forgery	2	Dex	-1
Reading Lips	3	Int	-2
Riding, Airborne	3	Wis	-2
Ventriloquism	2	Int	-2
Dwarf Group			
Ancient History[2]	1	Int	-1
Appraising	1	Int	0
Armorer	2	Int	-2
Engineering	2	Int	-3
Gem Cutting	2	Dex	-2
Languages, Ancient	1	Int	0
Religion	1	Wis	0
Weaponsmithing	3	Int	-3
Elf Group			
Ancient History[2]	1	Int	-1
Animal Lore[2]	1	Int	1
Armorer	2	Int	-2
Astrology[3]	2	Int	0

Bowyer/Fletcher	1	Dex	-1
Herbalism	2	Int	-2
Languages, Ancient	1	Int	0
Religion	1	Wis	0
Gnome Group			
Ancient History[2]	1	Int	-1
Engineering	2	Int	-3
Gem Cutting	2	Dex	-2
Languages, Ancient	1	Int	0
Religion	1	Wis	
Half-Elf Group			
Animal Lore[2]	1	Int	0
Local History[3]	1	Cha	0
Religion	1	Wis	0
Half-Vistani Group			
Ancient History[2]	1	Int	-1
Animal Lore[2]	1	Int	0
Astrology[3]	2	Int	0
Gaming	1	Cha	0
Halfling Group			
Animal Lore[2]	1	Int	0
Astrology[3]	2	Int	0
Gaming	1	Cha	0
Healing	2	Wis	-2
Juggling	1	Dex	-1
Human Group			
Hunting	1	Wis	-1
Local History[3]	1	Cha	0
Religion	1	Wis	0
Tracking[3]	2	Wis	0
Priest Group			
Ancient History[2]	1	Int	-1
Astrology[3]	2	Int	0
Healing	2	Wis	-2
Herbalism	2	Int	-2
Languages, Ancient	1	Int	0
Local History[3]	1	Cha	0
Musical Instrument	1	Dex	-1
Priestcraft[1]	1	Wis	0
Reading/Writing	1	Int	+1
Religion	1	Wis	0
Rogue Group			
Appraising	1	Int	0
Blind-fighting	2	NA	NA
Disguise	1	Cha	-1
Forgery	1	Dex	-1
Gaming	1	Cha	0
Gem Cutting	2	Dex	-2
Juggling	1	Dex	-1
Jumping	1	Str	0

Local History[3]	1	Cha	0
Musical Instrument	1	Dex	-1
Reading Lips	2	Int	-2
Set Snares	1	Dex	-1
Tightrope Walking	1	Dex	0
Tumbling	1	Dex	0
Ventriloquism	1	Int	-2
Warrior Group			
Animal Lore[2]	1	Int	0
Armorer	2	Int	-2
Blind-fighting	2	NA	NA
Bowyer/Fletcher	1	Dex	-1
Endurance	2	Con	0
Hunting	1	Wis	-1
Mountaineering	1	NA	NA
Running	1	Con	-6
Set Snares	1	Dex	-1
Survival[3]	2	Int	0
Tracking[3]	2	Wis	0
Weaponsmithing	3	Int	-3
Wizard Group			
Ancient History[2]	1	Int	-1
Astrology[3]	2	Int	0
Engineering	2	Int	-3
Gem Cutting	2	Dex	-2
Herbalism	2	Int	-2
Languages, Ancient	1	Int	0
Local History[3]	1	Cha	0
Reading/Writing	1	Int	+1
Spellcraft	1	Int	-2
Psionicist Group			
Contact[5]	1	Wis	0
Gem Cutting[5]	2	Dex	-2
Harness Subconscious[5]	2	Wis	-1
Hypnosis[5]	1	Cha	-2
Meditative Focus[5]	1	Wis	+1
Reading/Writing	1	Int	+1
Rejuvenation[5]	1	Wis	-1
Religion	1	Wis	0

[1] Priestcraft is identical to spellcraft, save that it deals with using priestly magic instead of wizardry. To understand both types of magic, a character must possess both priestcraft and spellcraft.

[2] Can only be applied to techniques/history/animals in home domain.

[3] When used outside home domain, apply a -2 penalty.

[4] When used to prepare his home domain's recipes, apply a +2 bonus.

[5] These proficiencies are explained in The Complete Psionics Handbook.

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